

COMPARATIVE & DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Faculty

Professors: John C. Hunter, James Mark Shields (Director)

Assistant Professor: Daniel Bret Leraul

Lecturer: Diane Jakacki

The comparative & digital humanities program approaches global traditions of ideas, history, literature, music and art in an interdisciplinary fashion. Designed to reflect contemporary trends in humanistic scholarship, it teaches students how to compare, analyze and integrate materials from different cultures, media and/or historical periods; these are vital skills for the 21st century world that conventional undergraduate disciplinary boundaries often exclude. These include the various ways in which, for example, digital technology has changed our relations to knowledge; how the categories “Asia” and the “West” have been constructed and represented; how translation works in a globalized world; how science and the humanities interact; and the historical and cultural shifts in the way knowledge has been classified. Our courses, taught by faculty from comparative & digital humanities and other humanities departments, are designed to help students develop a set of intellectual tools that can be applied in any professional or academic context. Classes are limited in size so students can 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. 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 on 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 & Digital Humanities Major

The **major** consists of eight courses (including a senior thesis) and a demonstration of reading proficiency in a foreign language. The courses include:

HUMN 100	The Humanities Now! ¹	1
Two of the following three period courses: ²		2
HUMN 128	Myth, Reason, Faith	
HUMN 150	Making Modern Worlds	
HUMN 250	Modernisms and Crises	
Two 200-level courses in Comparative & Digital Humanities (HUMN) ³		2
Two 300-level seminar courses in Comparative & Digital Humanities (HUMN) ⁴		2
HUMN 350	Senior Thesis Workshop ⁵	1
or HUMN 351	Honors Tutorial and Senior Thesis	
Foreign language requirement ⁶		

¹ An introduction to the methodologies of comparative and digital humanistic inquiry.

² These courses ground students in the broad outlines of world intellectual traditions. All three courses teach analytical writing and information literacy skills through mandatory research assignments in close consultation with the instructor and library staff.

³ These courses allow students to build on knowledge gained in the introductory courses in a variety of fields in the humanities.

⁴ These seminars allow in-depth analysis of a range of subjects and comparative methods.

⁵ The senior thesis 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 to complete the major. Successful completion of the thesis requirement (including an oral defense) counts as the Culminating Experience in comparative & digital humanities.

⁶ 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 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 exempt from the language requirement.

Minor in Comparative Humanities

A **minor** in comparative humanities consists of five courses. These must include:

Two of the following three period courses: 2

HUMN 128	Myth, Reason, Faith	
HUMN 150	Making Modern Worlds	
HUMN 250	Modernisms and Crises	

Three additional Comparative Humanities (HUMN) courses, at least one of which must be a 300-level seminar. 3

Minor in Digital Humanities

A **minor** in digital humanities consists of five courses. These must include:

Two of the following: 2

HUMN 100	The Humanities Now! ¹	
HUMN 270	Data Visualization for the Digital Humanities	
HIST 201	Introduction to Historical GIS	
HUMN 319	Independent Study ²	1

Two elective courses with the permission of the Digital Humanities Minor Coordinator 2

¹ Topics for HUMN 100 include Digging into the Digital, The Humanities Now!, Intro to Text Analysis and Techno-Culture-World.

² Students may elect to complete HUMN 319 Independent Study (or an equivalent approved independent study in another department) as a full-credit independent study or as two .5 credit independent studies.

Students must also complete a final DH portfolio that demonstrates a student's creation of artifacts in courses already taken and (if appropriate) DH work components of a thesis (departmental/honors). The student will create a website (WordPress) that consists of digital artifacts and a narrative that analyzes how these pieces fit together (a digital manifesto). Students may receive feedback from the DH minor coordinator before the formal submission of the digital portfolio. This final portfolio will be submitted for formal approval.

College of Arts & Sciences
Department and Program Learning Objectives

Majors in Comparative & Digital Humanities will be able to:

Compare and evaluate cultural differences in a non-hierarchical manner across boundaries of all kinds:

Historical (including situations, intellectual products and material remains of different periods);
Cultural (including race, gender, nationality, religion and sexual orientation); and
Formal (between different modes of thought and expression). (2, 3, 5, 6)

Critically compare intellectual materials of different or opposing types: textual with material artifacts; narrative with non-narrative texts; artistic with analytical modes of thought; analog and digital. (6, 8)

Understand the cultural, social, ethical and theoretical debates within the digital humanities. (2, 5, 9)

Demonstrate artful and effective oral and analytical skills, in analog and digital form. (7, 8)

Demonstrate proficiency in a second language. (3)

Numbers in parentheses reflect related Educational Goals of Bucknell University.

Courses

HUMN 100. The Humanities Now!. 1 Credit.

Offered Either Fall or Spring, Topics course; Lecture hours:3; Repeatable

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

HUMN 101. Foundations of AI. 1 Credit.

Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3

This introductory course explores artificial intelligence through a critical, hands-on lens. Students examine AI's foundations and historical development, investigating how these systems mirror and diverge from human cognition and learning. Through experimentation and reflection, students explore ethical, environmental and societal impacts while developing personal strategies to evaluate AI's capabilities and protect their own learning in an AI-driven world. First-year/Sophomore only.

HUMN 128. Myth, Reason, Faith. 1 Credit.**Offered Both Fall and Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An introduction to the most significant works (literature, poetry, theatre, philosophy, religious texts) in the Western and Asian intellectual traditions, extending from ancient Mesopotamia and Greece through late medieval Europe and/or East Asia. Not open to students who have completed RESC 098 "Myth, Reason, Faith". Seniors by permission only.

HUMN 150. Making Modern Worlds. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An interdisciplinary study of art, music, literature, science and philosophy from the European Renaissance through the late 19th century. The student will learn to relate these works to one another, to non-Western cultures, and to contemporary experience. Not open to students who have taken ENLS 150.

HUMN 230. Arts of Extraction: Hemispheric Representations of Ecological Injustice. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

Explore the social and environmental histories of capitalism in Latin America and the US through literary, filmic and photographic representations of resource extraction. Environmental collapse is imminent, but many can't see it. Can the arts help us see our world differently so that we might forestall its worst effects? Crosslisted as LAMS 230.

HUMN 232. Being Human in the Data Age. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

We are entering the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', in which technological advancements like artificial intelligence, quantum computing, robotics are causing seismic societal shifts. In this course we will challenge ourselves to think critically and act ethically in this new age, drawing on works by cultural critics and producers to help us situate this moment in a long history of technological revolutions.

HUMN 241. Germans and the World: Colonization, Emigration, Exile. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

Focuses on recorded experiences of German-language writers, poets, playwrights and filmmakers outside geographical boundaries of German states from 18th-21st C. Introduces concepts of cross-cultural exchange, linguistic assimilation, artistic synthesis and critical analysis of the writer's new cultural and linguistic context and the critical lens that is turned back on Germany. Crosslisted as GRMN 241.

HUMN 250. Modernisms and Crises. 1 Credit.**Offered Fall Semester Only; Lecture hours:3**

Traces the development of "modernity" (and its discontents) by looking at selected interdisciplinary texts and documents - from philosophy, literature, psychology, film, art, and other related disciplinary fields - that reflect or directly address cultural transformation during the 20th century.

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 Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An introduction to Chinese thought, including: the major schools and thinkers of the classical age, Chinese Buddhist philosophy, early modern Neo-confucianism, and Chinese philosophy since the Communist Revolution of 1949. Crosslisted as EAST 266 and PHIL 266.

HUMN 270. Data Visualization for the Digital Humanities. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An introduction to the techniques and issues of data visualization for the humanities. Interdisciplinary and comparative study, using both theoretical study and concrete examples. Not open to students who have taken ANOP 270.

HUMN 272. Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities. 1 Credit.**Offered Both Fall and Spring, Topics course; Lecture hours:3; Repeatable**

Comparative study investigating different cultures, historical epochs, narrative forms, media and traditions.

HUMN 273. Evolution of Digital Media. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

This course will trace the origins and development of the digital media products and practices that surround us in contemporary life. Although digital media are often represented as unprecedented and entirely "new," their growth follows patterns that were established in the industrial revolution and that this course will analyze. Crosslisted as ENFS 273.

HUMN 274. Advanced Spatial Humanities. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

We define ourselves spatially. To be spatially literate we must develop a critical understanding of maps as political texts written by people from different cultures and designed to express different worldviews. Students will become digital cartographers: utilizing visualization, wayfinding, and gaming software to make and manipulate maps.

HUMN 276. Topics in Comparative and Digital Humanities. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring, Topics course; Lecture hours:3; Repeatable**

This course will focus on a specific theme, problem, topic, or set of issues in a comparative analysis (between different historical periods, media, nations, etc.) and/or in the digital humanities.

HUMN 279. Never Again?: Antisemitism. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

This course explores antisemitism, yesterday and today, through a variety of texts and provides students with the opportunity to learn about the history of antisemitism in order to become more informed and critically aware of current instances of antisemitism. In English. Crosslisted as GRMN 279.

HUMN 280. Buddhist Philosophy in Comparative Perspective. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

A comparative introduction to the major texts, schools and figures of Asian Buddhist traditions, including the early Discourses, the Abhidharma, the Mahayana Sutras, and the works of Nagarjuna, Santideva, Zhiyi, Dogen, and contemporary Engaged Buddhism. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as PHIL 280.

HUMN 2NT. Humanities Non-traditional Study. 1 Credit.**Offered Fall, Spring, Summer, Topics course; Lecture hours:Varies, Other:3**

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

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 305. Utopias: Past, Present, Future. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

This seminar course critically investigates the utopian imagination as manifested in various influential texts throughout Asian and Western history, and considers the problems and possibilities of utopian thinking with regard to the present and future.

HUMN 306. US: Fever/Fantasy/Desire. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; 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. Crosslisted as ENLS 306 and ENLS 606.

HUMN 311. DH Research Seminar. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

Build something meaningful. Design and produce an original digital humanities research project that addresses real questions in cultural heritage studies. Apply cutting-edge DH methods—from text analysis to spatial mapping—to uncover new insights. Collaborate, innovate and present professional-quality research. This course is a requirement for the DH minor. Prerequisites: HUMN 100, HUMN 270, ANOP 270 or HUMN 271, or instructor permission.

HUMN 319. Independent Study. .5-1 Credits.**Offered Either Fall or Spring, Topics course; Lecture hours:Varies, Other:3; Repeatable**

Individual project of study supervised by instructor. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as HUMN 619.

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: WMST 150 or permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as WMST 325.

HUMN 321. Race & Gender in the 18th Century. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

This seminar explores and interweaves a variety of interdisciplinary approaches to apprehend eighteenth-century literature and culture (1660-1800). Focuses may include race, gender, sexuality, ability, class, postcolonialism, transnationalism, and environment. Crosslisted as ENLS 320 and ENLS 620.

HUMN 322. Creativity. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

This course evaluates the vexed relationship between cultural and economic values by tracing the history of creativity, from the divine creator and artistic genius to the "creative destruction" of capitalist innovation that has given rise to the "creative class" and inspired creative economies—from coops to communes—that envision alternative alternative futures.

HUMN 338. Seminar in Film and Digital Media Studies. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring, Topics course; Lecture hours:3; Repeatable**

A seminar in film and digital media studies. Topics may include the history of digital media, their relation to other media forms, the relations between critical reflection and media practice/production, and other relevant topics. Prerequisite: ENFS 130 or permission of the instructor.

HUMN 340. Seminar in Translation Studies. 1 Credit.**Topics course, 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. Crosslisted as ENLS 362.

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

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