Comparative Literature and Folklore Studies, M.A.

Graduate study in the Department of Comparative Literature and Folklore Studies (CLFS) emphasizes the active research into and theorizing of the comparative, the literary, the folkloric, and the cultural in a global context. CLFS faculty and students investigate cultures within, across, and beyond linguistic, regional, and national boundaries. The comparative and pluri-lingual nature of CLFS at UW–Madison enables the careful and informed study of new and evolving theories and cultural methodologies as well as of prior, present, and emerging cultural and literary practices and phenomena.

CLFS students study problems and create public projects exploring culture, genre, literary and cultural movements, mode, performance, periodization, theory and criticism, tradition, translation, and transmission. They engage problems and questions concerning the interaction and shifting boundaries of ‘elite’ and ‘folk’ literatures and other forms of creative expression and their transformation in their interaction; folklore and literature with other arts or other disciplines; and the relationships between creative expression and economic, sociopolitical, traditional, and other historical structures and issues, including ideological and value formations.

In addition to professional research and communication in the academic fields of comparative literature and folklore studies, CLFS is committed to public humanities projects that place professional expertise in the service of communities and publics.

Graduate study leads to the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in CLFS and must be in either a comparative literature named option or a folklore studies named option.

The department also offers doctoral minors in comparative literature and in folklore to interested Ph.D. candidates in other degree programs. At the beginning of study in the minor program, all students seeking a comparative literature or folklore doctoral minor should contact the CLFS director of graduate studies concerning coursework for the minor. Completion of the minor will be certified by either the director of graduate studies or the department chair.

Requirements

Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

Master's Degrees

M.A., with available named options in Comparative Literature, and Folklore Studies

Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement

30 credits

Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement

16 credits

Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement

Successful completion of the master’s degree requires 30 credit hours of coursework. This requirement includes that at least 50 percent of these credit hours must be received in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

Prior Coursework Requirements: Graduate Work from Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 9 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions, provided this coursework relates directly to the student’s CLFS graduate studies. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree may not be used to satisfy the CLFS degree requirements.

To apply credit for prior graduate coursework toward requirements the student should furnish the student’s advisor and the director of graduate study with a transcript of the coursework and copies of work done in courses and syllabi, if available. This task should be completed in anticipation of the Second Year exam. Credits deemed eligible to apply toward requirements will be listed in the official form that the department provides to the Graduate School in preparation for the award of the master’s degree.

Prior Coursework Requirements: UW–Madison Undergraduate

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

Prior Coursework Requirements: UW–Madison University Special

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 9 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a Master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

Credits Per Term Allowed

15 credits

Program-Specific Courses Required

COMP LIT 702 Problems in Comparative Studies; successful completion of the Examination in a Second Language; at least one graduate-level seminar in CLFS; students planning to pursue the Comparative Literature Ph.D. option must take COMP LIT 771 Literary Criticism; students planning to pursue the Folklore Studies Ph.D. option must take FOLKLORE 510 Folklore Theory (or other folklore course approved by the advisor); overall GPA of 3.5; successful completion of the Second Year (M.A.) examination.
OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT
3.5 GPA required.

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS
None.

PROBATION POLICY
The status of a student can be one of three options:

1. Good standing (progressing according to standards; any funding guarantee remains in place).
2. Probation (not progressing according to standards but permitted to enroll; loss of funding guarantee; specific plan with dates and deadlines in place in regard to removal of probationary status).
3. Unsatisfactory progress (not progressing according to standards; not permitted to enroll, dismissal, leave of absence or change of advisor or program).

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE
Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies. An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. An advisor is assigned to incoming students but can be changed. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor.

ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS
Second Year Examination
The Second Year Examination is a written examination administered by the program followed by an oral defense.

M.A. named option in Folklore Studies: In consultation with the student’s supervisor, a student pursuing the Folklore named option may elect to produce an M.A. thesis. The thesis will be presented to a committee of three faculty members, including the supervisor, and defended in an oral examination. Depending on the length and nature of the thesis project, and subject to the supervisor’s approval, this project may substitute for all or part of the second-year exam. If a student opts for the M.A. thesis option, that thesis project will be the subject of the master’s oral examination. Otherwise, the second year examination will be the subject of the Master’s Oral Examination.

Students who are not interested in pursuing the Ph.D. may elect to offer an M.A. thesis in place of the seminar requirement. In such cases, the student must work under the direction of a department faculty member who will act as supervisor of the thesis. The thesis will be presented to a committee of three faculty members, including the supervisor, and defended in an oral examination. A bound copy of the thesis must be deposited with the department. Otherwise, the Second Year Examination will be the subject of the Master’s Oral Examination.

TIME CONSTRAINTS
The Second Year Examination must be taken in the fourth semester of graduate study. If a candidate enters the graduate program with an M.A. in comparative literature from another institution, the Second Year Examination must be taken in the second semester of graduate study. Students entering with an M.A. in another discipline may take the examination in either the second or the fourth semester.

The thesis, written in consultation with the major professor, must be completed no later than two semesters after thesis work begins.

Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS
Second Language: An examination in a second language (other than English) must be taken by the end of the second semester of graduate study and before the Second Year Examination.

In the event that the linguistic tradition under examination cannot be covered by a member of the comparative literature and folklore studies faculty, the advisor will invite an appropriate member of the UW–Madison faculty to assist in the administration of the examination.

ADMISSIONS
Applicants to the graduate program in the CLFS should submit to the department a statement of purpose for graduate study, transcripts, letters of recommendation, a writing sample (in English) of no more than 15 pages, a list of foreign language and literature coursework, and Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores. (International applicants should consult the department and the Graduate School website for information and additional application requirements regarding TOEFL, MELAB or IELTS tests.)

Admission to graduate study in the comparative literature named option requires advanced foreign language work at the literary level in at least one language other than English; the student’s academic record should demonstrate the ability to work critically in at least two literatures (one of which may be English).

All entering students are admitted into one of the two named options in the M.A. program. Students are accepted into the Ph.D. program upon successful completion of the Second-Year Examination.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
• Articulates, critiques, or elaborates the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry and schools of practice in comparative humanities.
• Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in comparative humanities.
• Demonstrates understanding of comparative humanities in a historical, social, or global context.
• Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.
• Evaluates or synthesizes information to questions or challenges in comparative humanities.
• Communicates clearly in ways appropriate to comparative humanities.
PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

- Recognizes and applies principles of ethical and professional conduct.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Dharwadker, Gilmore (also Landscape Architecture), Layoun, Livorni (chair, also French and Italian), Rosenblum (also Jewish Studies); Associate Professors Livanos, Statkiewicz; Assistant Professors Fielder, Grunewald, Neyrat, Wells. Affiliate Faculty: Adler (German, Nordic, and Slavic), Casid (Art History), Garlough (also Gender and Women’s Studies), Goodkin (French and Italian), Guyer (English), Kern (Asian Languages and Cultures), Longinovic (German, Nordic, and Slavic), Valentine (Linguistics); Associate Professors Kapust (Political Science); International Affiliate Faculty: Ramalho de Sousa Santos (University of Coimbra, Portugal). See also Faculty (http://clfs.wisc.edu/people/faculty) on the department website.