The PhD Program in Comparative Literature at Louisiana State University is recruiting students. Our dynamic degree starts with a core curriculum grounded in the history of literary theory and criticism. With the guidance of faculty, students develop their own degree plans, combining the study of literature, literary theory, language, philosophy, art, history, and other cultural phenomena in exciting and innovative ways. As an interdepartmental program, Comparative Literature draws upon the strengths of its affiliated departments: English, French Studies, Foreign Languages & Literatures, Geography & Anthropology, History, Music, Theatre, Philosophy & Religious Studies, Women & Gender Studies, and more.

Students who have received a BA or MA in Comparative Literature, in another national literary tradition, or in allied areas of study apply directly to our PhD program. Those who have completed the BA with qualifications in specific disciplines have the option of completing an MA in English, French Studies, Hispanic Studies, Philosophy, or any other approved field during their course of studies. Students who apply before January 15, 2022, will be considered for graduate assistantships for the 2022-2023 academic year and beyond.

As the place of the humanities in the university curriculum evolves in keeping with our increasingly global perspectives, comparative literature enables and enhances the necessary dialogue between disciplines and diverse geographical locations. Comparative Literature at LSU is an interdisciplinary PhD program that encourages students to approach literary studies from multiple perspectives. The program’s fifty-four accomplished faculty members guide our select cohort of graduate students to develop their own research agendas and degree plans. Both faculty members and students have come from across the globe to study, teach, and publish on literatures and other media in many languages from a wide range of historical periods. The program offers seminars that address linguistic, cultural and critical diversity. It has proven strengths in Atlantic Studies (Africa, the Americas, Europe, and the Caribbean), Asian Studies, Performance Studies, Film Studies, Post-Colonial Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, and in traditional Comparative Literary Studies. Students complete their degree in an average of five to six years. Many go on to academic positions in American universities and abroad.

Students are closely mentored during the entire process leading to their degree. The faculty takes an active role in the students’ career development, aware of its responsibility to provide the expertise necessary for them to secure positions in academe, and to function at the highest professional levels. The program regularly hosts conferences and speakers. We often send students to the Harvard Institute for World Literature. The recent National Research Council evaluation ranked Comparative Literature at LSU very favorably.

**Degree Requirements**

Students must demonstrate a competency in at least one national literary tradition other than their native language at the time they apply or by the end of their second semester. They design their own programs of study in consultation with their Major Professor, Advisory Committee, and the Program Director. They also acquire competency in a third language and literary tradition before they begin their dissertation.

The Program is organized around a core curriculum. All students are required to take both CPLT 7010 (History of Literary Theory and Criticism: From Antiquity to Romanticism) and CPLT 7020 (History of Literary Theory and Criticism: From the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present). They must take both CPLT 7120 (Topics in the Theory of Criticism) and CPLT 7130 (Topics in Comparative Literature) at least twice. Students are also required to take CPLT 7140 (Topics in Interdisciplinary Study) or CPLT 7150 (Performance, Film, and Media) at least once. Since the specific topics of these three courses differ from semester to semester, each may be taken more than once, up to a maximum of 9 credit hours. For all students, the distribution of the remaining courses required for the degree is designed by the student in consultation with his or her Major Professor and Advisory Committee. In all cases, a primary aim is to make sure that the Comparative Literature graduate has sufficient training in at least one national literary tradition (e.g., English, French, Spanish, Yoruba, Farsi, etc.) to compete effectively in today’s academic job market. All students must pass a general examination at or near the end of course work, assessing the student’s command of three areas of concentration, and they must prepare and orally defend a satisfactory dissertation on an approved topic.

Assistantships and Fellowships are available. For detailed information about the program and how to apply, see our website <https://www.lsu.edu/hss/complit/index.php>. To apply, consult LSU Graduate School website at <https://www.lsu.edu/graduateschool/admissions/apply.php>.

Contact the Program Director, Sharon Weltman at cplt@lsu.edu when you apply or if you have specific questions.