

## CWL 582: Proseminar in Comparative Literature

The course will include two parts: theory and practice. The opening theoretical bookshelf will focus primarily on writings that address the question of comparative literature as a changing discipline from the 1950s to the present; theoretical works that were crucial in the formation of comparative literature will be included, as well as works of contemporary critical theory that facilitate the discussion of literatures and cultures in a comparative perspective, although the primary purpose of the course is not an overview of critical theory or any one approach to it. "Practice" will be comprised of a set of student centered learning workshops on conference papers, publication in journals, grant proposals, and course design.

### Grading:

- 1) Class participation 20%
- 2) Oral presentation 30%
- 3) Final project: critical bibliography or critical essay 40%
- 4) Protocols (summary of previous class) 10%

### Readings:

John Guillory's Cultural Capital, Chapters 1, 3, and 5

Hayden White, Figural Realism, Johns Hopkins, 1997

Erich Auerbach, Mimesis

David Damrosch, What is World Literature, Princeton University Press, 2003

Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," Rabelais and His World, excerpts

Higonnet, Margaret R., ed. *Borderwork: Feminist Engagements with Comparative Literature*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1994.

Bernheimer, Charles, ed. *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995.

Levin, Harry. *Grounds for Comparison*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1972.

Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator"

Godzich, Wlad. "Emergent Literature and the Field of Comparative Literature." *The Comparative Perspective on Literature: Approaches to Theory and Practice*. Ed. Clayton Koelb and Susan Noakes. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988. viii, 18-36.

Chow, Rey. *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*.

Wellek, René. "The Concept of Comparative Literature." *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 2 (1953): 1-5.

Wellek, René. "The Crisis in Comparative Literature." *Concepts of Criticism*. Ed. Stephen G. Nicholas, Jr. New Haven: Yale UP, 1963. 282-95.

PMLA January 2001, "Special Topic: Globalizing Literary Studies"

Practicum:

- Workshop on transforming a seminar paper to conference presentation
- Workshop on journals. Students will present reviews of *Critical Inquiry*, *Signs*, *Comparative Literature*, *Comparative Literature Today*, *Representations*, plus journals in area of specialization of students in the course
- Workshop on writing a grant proposal for the comparative literature project
- Workshop on designing undergraduate courses in comparative literature

Topical outline:

Defining the canon; defining comparative literature

Weeks 1-2

Guillory

Weeks 3

Wellek and Levin

Weeks 4

Auerbach and White

Weeks 5-6 Critical interventions

Benjamin

Bakhtin

Weeks 7-9: Shifts in the field

Bernheimer

Damrosch

Godzich

Chow

Higonnet

PMLA Jan 2001 Special issue on globalization

Weeks 10-13

Workshops:

From seminar paper to conference presentation

Review of journals

Undergraduate course

Grant writing

Week 14: Conclusions