Spring 2013 Course Offerings

Comparative Literature COML
Russian Literature RUSSL
Russian Language RUSSA

Updated January 10 2013 subject to change

©COML Core Course: COML 4015 (spring) and required course for COML Majors: COML 4999 (fall) ✓

Chair: Professor Natalie Melas
Director of Graduate Studies: Professor Karen Pinkus
Director of Undergraduate Studies: Professor Anindita Banerjee

Comparative Literature COML

First year writing seminars

- Placement is by electronic submission of a ballot. fws.arts.cornell.edu/ballot
- 3 credit hours

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Science and Literature
16564 SEM 101 MW 07:30PM - 08:45PM Hamilton,D (dsh96)

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Translation America
16565 SEM 102 MWF 11:15AM - 12:05PM Kosick,R (rsk226)

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Music in Black and White
16566 SEM 103 MW 07:30PM - 08:45PM Dreher,R (rgd55)

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Literature Between Language
16567 SEM 104 TR 10:10AM - 11:25AM Talusan,M (mrt34)

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Writing the City
16568 SEM 105 MW 02:55PM - 04:10PM Kaakenen,K (krk27)

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Language & (Post) Coloniality
16569 SEM 106 TR 08:40AM - 09:55AM Singh,K (kas379)

COML 1109 - FWS: Writing across Cultures: Poetry's Image
16570 SEM 107 TR 02:55PM - 04:10PM Monroe,J (jbm3)

COML 1133 - FWS: Studies in Literary Theory: At the Limits of Language
16602 SEM 101 MWF 10:10AM - 11:00AM Leraul,D (dbl65)

COML 1133 - FWS: Studies in Literary Theory: Literature, Thought, Reality
16603 SEM 102 TR 01:25PM - 02:40PM Sverjensky,T (tss67)

COML 2000 - Introduction to Visual Studies
(crosslisted)
(also VISST 2000, ARTH 2000, AMST 2000) (LA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
8941 LEC 001 TR 02:55PM - 04:10PM
Pham,M (mp724)
Provides a broad introduction of modes of vision and the historical impact of visual images, visual structures, and visual space on culture, communication, and politics. The question of “how we see” is discussed in terms of (1) procedures of sight (from optical machines to the psychology of vision and the philosophy of aesthetics); (2) spaces of vision (from landscapes to maps to cities); (3) objects of vision (from sacred sites to illuminated books to digital art); and (4) performances of vision (race, sexualities, ethnicities, cultures). Of importance to the course is the practical and conceptual relation of 20th-century visual technologies (photography, cinema, video, and computing) to their historical corollaries in the arts. The course draws on the visual traditions of both Western and non-Western societies and study texts that have defined the premises and analytic vocabularies of the visual. Through viewings, screenings, collaborative writing, and art projects, students develop the critical skills necessary to appreciate how the approaches that define visual studies complicate traditional models of defining and analyzing art objects. Guest lecturers occasionally address the class. Requirements: two objective midterm exams; occasional listserv postings; two five-page papers.

**COML 2020 - Great Books**

(LA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
6592 LEC 001 MWF 10:10AM - 11:00AM
McEnaney, T (tpm88)
This course traces storytelling as it has developed through interaction with a variety of technology, from the Renaissance printing press to today’s social media. Through readings of Rabelais, Cervantes, Swift, Flaubert, M. Shelley, Faulkner, Morrison, Cortázar, Pynchon, Piglia and others we will examine how literature has helped forge our understanding and construction of the tools we use to organize, structure and otherwise change the world.

**COML 2214 Robots, Automations, and Androids** *New course!*

Spring. 4 credits.
15564 LEC 001 TR 11:40AM - 12:55PM
Balsa Marin, M (mb823)
Robots, automatons, and androids populate some of the most fascinating and thought-provoking tales of the 20th Century. Films like *Metropolis, Blade Runner, Bicentennial Man, Artificial Intelligence*, and *The Matrix* exemplify our fascination for the kind of stories that constitute this course’s subject matter. Assuming that every culture projects itself onto the world by means of its own artistic creations, we will study tales about human replicas as metaphors for, and allegories of, some of the values and ideas that underlie contemporary modernity: our fears, hopes, worries, joys, utopias, dystopias, realities, and fantasies. Aside from the films mentioned above, our reading/viewing list includes Asimov’s *I, robot*, Capek’s *R.U.R.*, Levin’s *Stepford Wives*, Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, and Huxley’s *Brave New World*.

**COML 2230 - The Comic Theatre**
(crosslisted)
(also CLASS 2651, PMA 2635) # (LA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
14994 LEC 001 MWF 01:25PM - 02:15PM
Rusten, J (jsr5)
The origins of comic drama in ancient Greece and Rome, and its subsequent incarnations especially in the Italian renaissance (Commedia erudita and Commedia dell’arte), Elizabethan England, 17th-century France, the English Restoration, and Hollywood in the thirties and forties. Chief topics will be the growth of the comic theatrical tradition and conventions; techniques and themes of comic plots (trickster, parody, farce, caricature); and the role of comedy in society.
**COML 2760 Desire**  
(crosslisted)  
(also ENGL 2760, FGSS 2760, PMA 2680) (LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
14749 LEC 001 MW 07:30PM - 08:45PM  
Hanson,E (eh36)  
“Language is a skin,” the critic Roland Barthes once wrote: “I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers, or fingers at the tip of my words. My language trembles with desire.” Sexual desire has a history, even a literary history, which we will examine through an introductory survey of European dramatic literature from Plato and Aristophanes to Jean Genet and Caryl Churchill, as well as a survey of classic readings in Western sexual theory from the Ancient Greeks through Freud and Foucault to contemporary feminism and queer theory. Topics for discussion will include Greek pederasty, Christian mysticism, hysteria, sadomasochism, pornography, cybersex, and other performative pleasures.

**COML 3010 - Hispanic Theatre Production**  
(crosslisted)  
also LSP 3010, LATA 3010  
Spring. 1-3 credits.  
Instructor Consent Required.  
17013 SEM 101 MW 07:30PM - 10:30PM  
Castillo,D (dac9), Dreyer-Lude,M (md496)  
Permission of instructor -- please contact Melanie Dreyer-Lude md496@cornell.edu and Debra Castillo dac9@cornell.edu to add the course.  
Students develop a specific dramatic text for full-scale production. The course involves selection of an appropriate text, close analysis of the literary aspects of the play, and group evaluation of its representational value and effectiveness. All students in the course are involved in some aspects of production of the play, and write a final paper as a course requirement. Credit is variable depending upon the student’s role in play production: a minimum of 50 hours of work is required for 1 credit; a maximum of 3 credits are awarded for 100 hours or more of work.

**COML 3115 - Video and New Media: Art, Theory, Politics**  
(crosslisted)  
(also ENGL 3115, PMA 3515, VISST 3115) (LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
Limited 25 students. Restricted to undergraduates.  
7956 SEM 101 M 07:00PM - 10:00PM  
Murray,T (tcml)  
The course will offer an overview of video art, alternative documentary video, and digital installation and networked art. It will analyze four phases of video and new media: (1) the development of video from its earliest turn away from television; (2) video’s relation to art and installation; (3) video’s migration into digital art; (4) the relation of video and new media to visual theory and social movements. Screenings will include early political and feminist video (Ant Farm, Rosler, Paper Tiger TV, Jones), conceptual video of the ’80s and ’90s (Vasulka, Lucier, Viola, Hill), gay and multicultural video of the ’90s (Muntadas, Riggs, Piper, Fung, Parmar), networked and activist new media of the 21st century (Critical Art Ensemble, Electronic Disturbance Theater, SubRosa, Preemptive Media). Secondary theoretical readings on postmodernism, video theory, multicultural theory, and digital culture will provide students with a cultural and political context for the discussion of video and new media style, dissemination, and reception.

**COML 3150 - Literature and Media in Japan**  
(crosslisted)  
(also ASIAN 3318, VISST 3318) (CA-AS)
The course traces dynamic relays and reciprocal influences among novels, films, anime, comics, and digital arts in Japan. We will consider the extensive cultural commentary that has surrounded the emergence of new media in an attempt to assess their transformative aesthetic, social, and political implications. The course will use materials with translations or subtitles in English.

**COML 3260 - Christianity and Judaism**  
(crosslisted)  
(also RELST 3260) # (LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
6590 SEM 101 TR 08:40AM - 09:55AM  
Carmichael,C (cmc13)  

**COML 3440 - The Tragic Theatre**  
(crosslisted)  
(also CLASS 3645 , PMA 3724) # (LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
Limited for 40 students.  
15021 LEC 001 TR 10:10AM - 11:25AM  
Ahl,F (fma2)  
Tragedy and its audiences from ancient Greece to modern theater and film. Topics: origins of theatrical conventions; Shakespeare and Seneca; tragedy in modern theater and film. Works studied will include: Aeschylus’ Agamemnon; Sophocles’ Oedipus Tyrannus, Philoctetes; Euripides’ Alcestis, Helen, Iphigeneia in Aulis, Orestes; Seneca’s Thyestes, Trojan Women; Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar, Titus Andronicus, Othello; Strindberg’s The Father; Durrenmatt’s The Visit; Bergman’s Seventh Seal; Cacoyannis’ Iphigeneia.

**COML 3480 - Shakespeare and Europe**  
(crosslisted)  
(also ENGL 3490) # (LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
15165 LEC 001 MWF 11:15AM - 12:05PM  
Kennedy,W. J. (wjk3)  
In their own times, Shakespeare’s plays registered a strong interest in the culture and society of Renaissance Europe beyond England. In later times, they cast a powerful spell over culture and society in 19th- and 20th-century Europe. This course will examine their debts to and influences upon continental drama. Readings will focus upon Shakespeare’s plays in relation to Italian comedy, early French tragedy, and plays by Friedrich Schiller, Bertolt Brecht, and Luigi Pirandello.

**COML 3860 - Literature and Film of South Asia**  
(crosslisted)  
(also ASIAN 3387 , PMA 3761 , VISST 3870 ) (LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
15161 SEM 101 MW 02:55PM - 04:10PM  
Banerjee,A (ab425)  
A survey of literary and filmic texts from the area encompassing present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Discussions are organized around issues such as nation and narrative; historiography; secularism and religious
nationalism; gender; marginalized and diasporic identities. All texts are in English translation/subtitles.

Though focused on the twentieth century, the course will engage epic and folkloric discourses in context. Authors to be studied range from canonical figures of Rabindranath Tagore, M. K. Gandhi, Ismat Chughtai, and Sadat Hasan Manto to contemporary literary pioneers such as Mahasweta Devi, Kishwar Naheed, K. R. Ananthamurthy, and Taslima Nasreen. Films include auteur and independent cinema, Bombay potboilers, and documentaries.

**COML 3891 – Occupied France Through Film**
(crosslisted)
(also FREN 3840)
Spring. 4 credits.
15099 SEM 101 MW 02:55PM - 04:10PM
Greenberg, M (mdg17)
There will be weekly film viewings on Monday evenings.
The Second World War and the Occupation of France by German forces had a traumatic impact on the nation’s identity. We will examine the way France has tried to deal with this conflicted period through a series of films that each deal, directly or indirectly with the major questions posed by history to French “memory” of the Occupation. What was the role of collaboration, resistance, anti-Semitism, of writers and intellectuals during this traumatic period? How has film helped to define and re-shape the ways in which France has come to terms with its conflicted past?

**COML 4015 - Passion and Literary Enlightenment # (LA-AS)**
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
Core Course for COML Majors.
15172 SEM 101 TR 01:25PM - 02:40PM
Saccamano, N (ncs5)
This course will consider the essential role of the passions in views of human nature and society primarily in the 18th century, and will examine how the priority given to life, the body, and acquisitive and sexual drives subverted traditional ethics and produced “sentimentality” as a reaction. Through readings of novels and some moral and political philosophy (Montaigne, Cavendish, Hobbes, Cleland, La Mettrie, Laclos, Rousseau, Nietzsche), we will discuss such topics as: the “savage” and the “state of nature” in genealogies of moral and political development; the “sexual contract,” civil society, and the family as a political-economic institution; love and sympathy in relation to law and obligation; pornography and sentimental-sexual education; tragedy, suffering, and ethical community.
We will also read theoretical work by Althusser, Foucault, Butler, and Zizek to address narrative form (especially fictional autobiography and epistolary novels) and mechanisms of identity formation.

**COML 4055 - Theater, Theory, Polis**  New course!
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
15167 SEM 101 TR 02:55PM - 04:10PM
Balsa Marin, M (mb823)
From Plato and Aristotle until today, a number of Western thinkers have been intrigued by the ways in which two seemingly different modes of representation—the political and the theatrical—are indeed inextricably related to each other. This course proposes an exploration of the links between the theatron and the polis from a double perspective. First, departing from an analysis of Plato’s and Aristotle’s respective thoughts on the relationship between political life and drama, we will study a selection of theoretical texts that explore such links. And second, we will analyze how some prominent playwrights from the 20th Century explore the same question—not through theory but, rather, in theatrical practice. On the theoretical side, our reading list will include *The Republic* and *The Poetics* as well as Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*, Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*, Marx’s *The Eighteenth
Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, Benjamin’s The Origin of German Tragic Drama, and Arendt’s The Human Condition. On the dramaturgical side, we will study Artaud’s The Theater and Its Double, Boal’s Theater of the Oppressed, Brecht on Theater, Arrabal’s The Labyrinth, Buero Vallejo’s The Basement Window, Beckett’s Waiting for Godot, and Orson Welles’ The Trial.

COML 4105 - Soundscapes of the Americas  New course!
(crosslisted)
(also ENGL 4105 , ROMS 4105)
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
15169 SEM 101 M 02:30PM - 04:25PM
McEnaney,T (tpm88)
In this course we will consider how sound, and sound technologies from the gramophone to the telephone, from radio to the mp3, have influenced and continue to shape cultural and political life in the Americas. Along the way, we might want to ask: How did early border radio call into question the territorial limits of nations in the Americas? How does the history of the phonograph relate to the cultural construction of race? What might it mean to think of a culture by how it listens rather than how it sees? Readings, films and sound art may include J. Agee, C. Aira, L. Anderson, G. Cabrera-Infante, F. Coppola, R. Ellison, N. Guillén, L. Hughes, V. Huidobro, T. Morrison, M. Puig, G. Stein, J. Toomer, C. Vallejo, O. Welles, W.C. Williams, R. Wright.

COML 4165 - In the Vein of Kafka  New course!
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
15168 SEM 101 T 10:10AM - 12:05PM
Maxwell,B (bhm4)
The course begins with the banal observation of Franz Kafka's pervasive influence on many, many later writers. The more important beginning, though, is the understanding that we will be done with Kafka when we are done with bureaucracy, anxiety, exhaustion, family tragicomedy, interpretation, bad air, ambiguous sexuality, religious befuddlement, written and unwritten law, and dreams. Visiting Prague, the Chinese poet Bei Dao relates that his host “took us to Kafka's home beside the square of the Old Town, and pointed out that beneath our feet flowed a huge vein of ore.” Reading Kafka and others--Robert Walser, Roberto Arlt, Bruno Schulz, W. G. Sebald, James Kelman, Can Xue, Haruki Murakami--we will mine that ore.

COML 4182 - Indebted Histories: Credit and Debt in Critical Thought
(crosslisted)
(also AMST 4974 , ENGL 4974 , SHUM 4974)
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
15324 SEM 101 T 12:20PM - 02:15PM
McClanahan,A (ajm475)
In this class we will explore the place of debt and credit in humanistic scholarship and critical theory, asking in what ways the current credit crisis brings us to this subject with renewed urgency. How does the transformation of credit into a speculative investment change our sense of credit as a social mechanism? How do the ongoing debates about national debt reframe the discourse of public borrowing? What are the “moral economies” appropriate to a historical moment in which default and bankruptcy are ever more common? We will explore these and other questions in the context of anthropology, political economy, literary criticism, and philosophy. We will also ground our analysis by pausing on four specific “sites”: the development of public credit; the debt held by developing nations; the securitization of credit in the 1980s; and the anti-debt political movements of the current moment.
**COML 4200 - Independent Study**
Spring. Variable credit.
1-4CR Stdnt Opt
7002 IND 601 Staff
7003 IND 602 Staff
Permission of instructor required. Times to be arranged with the instructor. COML 4190 and COML 4200 may be taken independently of each other. *Request for Independent Study* forms are available in the Office of Undergraduate Advising, 55 Goldwin Smith Hall.

**COML 4260 - Biblical Seminar II**
(crosslisted)
(also RELST 4260) # (HA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
6588 SEM 101 W 02:30PM - 04:25PM
Carmichael, C (cmc13)

*Topic: The Book of Exodus*

updated and correct course description:
A detailed inquiry into the contents of the Book of Exodus to explore such topics as: the exodus as a liberation movement that inspired later ones; the construction of myths about national origins and where laws come from, rules judging the conduct of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt, idolatry and politics, and the role of imitation par opposition in history-writing with particular attention to Exodus as a counter-Genesis.

**COML 4515 - Ariosto, Rabelais, Spenser**
(crosslisted)
(also ENGL 4515, ROMS 4515) # (LA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
Co-meets with COML 6515 / ENGL 6515 / ROMS 6515.
15173 SEM 101 W 02:30PM - 04:25PM
Kennedy, W. J. (wjk3)
A study of competing claims between narrative forms and national ideologies in Ariosto’s epic romance, *Orlando Furioso* (Italy, 1516-32); Rabelais’s prose fiction, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (France, 1532-52); and Spenser’s allegorical epic, *The Faerie Queene* (England, 1590-96).

**COML 4571 – Book to Book: African Literature to World Literature**
(crosslisted)
(also ENGL 4570, ASRC 4570)
Spring. 4 credits.
14788 SEM 101 T 12:20PM - 02:15PM
Ngugi, M (mwn39)
In this course, we will consider the “she said, he said” in colonial and anti-colonial literature. In order to understand what was at stake in the colonial projects, and how both the colonizer and colonized understood colonization and resistance, we shall use Marxist, feminist and psychoanalytic concepts and theories to look at texts where European and African authors have been in direct conversation. Pairing Mannoni and Fanon, Achebe and Conrad, Defoe and Coetzee and others, as well as enlightenment ideologies, and the nationalism inherent in colonial and anti-colonial projects, we will engage the voices and vulnerabilities of both the colonized and colonizer.
COML 4750 - Contemporary Readings of the Ancients
(crosslisted)
(also GOVT 4705 ) (CA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
Co-meets with COML 6727 /GOVT 6509.
15230 SEM 101 W 02:30PM - 04:25PM
Rubenstein,D (dsr27)
Occasioned by the new publication of Alain Badiou’s Republic, this semester we will focus on contemporary continental readings of Plato. A significant part of the semester will involve a close reading of The Republic, inspired by Badiou and Avital Ronell’s Loser Sons. Other texts will include Timaeus and The Phaedrus; Derrida, Baudrillard, Le Doeuff and Irigaray will figure among the interlocutors.

COML 4790 - Introduction to Media Theory
(crosslisted)
(also PMA 4410 , GERST 4115 , VISST 4100 ) (CA-AS)
Spring. 4 credits.
8322 SEM 101 W 02:30PM - 04:25PM
Hanrahan,B (beh76)
Through careful readings of a wide range of media theoretical texts from the late 19th to early 21st century, this seminar will trace the development of critical reflection on technologies, media and media systems ranging from the printing press to photography, from gramophones to radio technologies, from pre-cinematic optical devices to film and television, and from telephony and typewriters to the Internet. Topics include the relationship between representation and technology, the history and the historicity of perception, the interplay of aesthetics, technology and politics, and the effect of the media environment on notions of imagination, literacy, communication, reality and truth.

COML 4791 - Seminar II in Cinema : The Films of Ingmar Bergman
(crosslisted)
(also PMA 4561)
Spring. 4 credits.
14891 SEM 101 WF 01:25PM - 04:25PM
Fredericksen,D (dlf10)
Close analyses of Bergman’s films, from the early 1950s to the end of his film-making career, nested within the biography of Bergman, the art cinema narration characteristic of modernist film as a historical pattern, the depth psychological and religious aspects of his work, and Swedish cultural patterns. Suitable for undergraduates with some course work in film or literary analysis, and graduate students in the various arts. (HTC)

COML 4830 - Imagining the Holocaust
(crosslisted)
(also ENGL 4580, GERST 4570, JWST 4580)
Spring. 4 credits.
8197 SEM 101 R 10:10AM - 12:05PM
Schwarz,D (dhrs6)
What is the role of the literary imagination in keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive for our culture? We shall examine major and widely read Holocaust narratives that have shaped the way we understand and respond to the Holocaust. We shall begin with first person reminiscences—Wiesel’s Night, Levi’s Survival at Auschwitz, and The
Diary of Anne Frank—before turning to realistic fictions such as Kineally’s Schindler’s List (and Spielberg’s film), Kertesz’s Fateless, Kosinski’s The Painted Bird, and Ozick’s “The Shawl.” We shall also read the mythopoeic vision of Schwarz-Bart’s The Last of the Just, the illuminating distortions of Epstein’s King of the Jews, the Kafkaesque parable of Appelfeld’s Badenheim 1939, and the fantastic cartoons of Spiegelman’s Maus books.

**COML 4860 - Contemporary Poetry and Poetics**
(crosslisted)
(also AMST 4880, ENGL 4880, SPAN 4880) (LA-AS)
Spring, 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
Co-meets with COML 6865/ENGL 6880.
15180 SEM 101R 12:20PM - 02:15PM
Monroe, J (jbm3)
What gives contemporary poetry and poetics its resonance and value? What are its dominant features, audiences, and purposes? In an increasingly global, pervasively technological culture, what’s become of such familiar distinctions as the “traditional” and the “experimental,” the “mainstream” and the “alternative”? How does contemporary poetry situate itself among other genres, disciplines, discourses, and media? How are we to understand its evolving public spheres and its relation to the central cultural and historical developments of our time? With special attention to poetry since 9/11, this seminar will explore these and related questions in a range of works that open onto the rich interplay of contemporary poetry and poetics with issues concerning personal and collective identity, language, and culture.

**COML 4940 – Senior Essay**
Fall, spring. 4 credits.
7004 IND 601 Staff
Times TBA individually in consultation with director of Senior Essay Colloquium. Approximately 50 pages to be written over the course of two semesters in the student’s senior year under the direction of the student’s advisor. An R grade is assigned on the basis of research and a preliminary draft completed in the first semester. A letter grade is awarded on completion of the second semester.

**COML 4945 - Body Politics of African Literature**  *New course!*
(crosslisted)
(also ASRC 4995, FGSS 4945)
Spring, 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
Co-meets with ASRC 6945/COML 6945/FGSS 6945.
15565 SEM 101 R 02:30PM - 04:25PM
Diabate, N (nd326)
Questions of the body and sexuality, and their intersections in the African context carry a long history of contested significations in a process of apparently ceaseless revision. In this course, we will examine how contemporary postcolonial African works engage and revise controversial issues such as the conception in nineteenth-century racist writings of the colonized as embodiment rather than subject, or as pathological and hypersexed bodies. Additionally, we will take on contemporary othering discourses around HIV/AIDS and Female Genital Cutting, the criminalization of non-conventional sexualities, and women’s uses of their bodies as modes of contestation in the postcolonial nation-state. By investigating these questions, we enter debates around human rights, storytelling, neo-colonialism, sexuality, power and resistance. As we focus on how African fiction writers have taken up questions of the body and resistance, we will also engage theorists, including but not certainly limited to Agamben, Butler, Hoad, Mbembe, Mudimbe, and Spillers, detecting the ways in which practices and discourses around bodies in the African context shape contemporary theories and vice versa.
**COML 6200 - Independent Study**  
Spring. 1-4 credits, variable.  
7005 IND 601 Staff  
7006 IND 602 Staff  
7627 IND 603 Cohen, W (wic1)  
Permission of instructor required. Times to be arranged with the instructor.  
COML 6190 and 6200 may be taken independently of each other. Applications available in 240 Goldwin Smith Hall.

**Cancelled** COML 6225 - Literary Theory and Cognitive Science  
(crosslisted)  
(also FREN 6260)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
Enrolled students should already have a good command of literary theory and/or cognitive science.  
L. Dubreuil.

**COML 6362 - Bandung Blues: Colonialism After Colonialism**  
*New course!*  
Spring. 4 credits.  
Limited to 15 students.  
15568 SEM 101 T 02:30PM - 04:25PM  
Melas, N (nam5)  
This course will query the failure and persistence of the emancipatory arc of twentieth century colonialism from anticolonialism to decolonization to postcolonialism. What temporalities and regimes of historicity does this interrupted progression imply? What relations between art and politics, or imagination and fact, or expression and sovereignty might it draw? Authors might include, Chakrabarty, Gilroy, Prashad, Scott, Mbembe, Spivak, CLR James, Césaire, Glissant, Senghor, Sembene, Sissako, Condé.

**COML 6515 - Ariosto, Rabelais, Spenser**  
(crosslisted)  
(also ENGL 6515 /ROMS 6515)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
Limited to 15 students.  
Co-meets with COML 4515 /ENGL 4515 /ROMS 4515.  
Kennedy, W.J. (wjk3)  
A study of competing claims between narrative forms and national ideologies in Ariosto’s epic romance, *Orlando Furioso* (Italy, 1516-32); Rabelais’s prose fiction, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (France, 1532-52); and Spenser’s allegorical epic, *The Faerie Queene* (England, 1590-96).

**COML 6727 - Contemporary Readings of the Ancients**  
(crosslisted)  
(also GOVT 6509)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
Co-meets with COML 4750 /GOVT 4705.  
15248 SEM 101 W 02:30PM - 04:25PM  
Rubenstein, D (dsr27)  
Occasioned by the new publication of Alain Badiou’s *Republic*, this semester we will focus on contemporary continental readings of Plato. A significant part of the semester will involve a close reading of *The Republic*, inspired by Badiou and Avital Ronell’s *Loser Sons*. Other texts will include *Timaeus* and *The Phaedrus*; Derrida, Baudrillard, Le Doeuff and Irigaray will figure among the interlocutors.

**Cancelled** COML 6785 - What is an Act?  
*New course!*

---

*COML 6190*
**COML 6786 - Constructing the Death Drive, between Psychoanalysis and Philosophy** *New course!*

(crosslisted)
(also FREN 6330, GERST 6991)
Spring. 4 credits.
16428 SEM 101 F 12:20PM - 02:15PM
McNulty,T (tkm9)

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud theorizes the death drive as a “drive to inanimacy,” famously declaring that “the aim of all life is death.” Yet the death drive is concerned with something other than the death that brings organic life to an end. Unlike an instinct, which is exhausted by the attainment of its aim or object, the drive is “unbound,” having no object or aim—and thus no limit (including death itself). Whence the interminable character of repetition compulsion and the unlimited return of trauma. Unlike the metaphor of “energy” so often used to describe it, however, Freud reminds us that the death drive has no materiality and cannot be “given” psychically, even in the unconscious—which is why we can speak of it only in speculative or mythical terms. Gilles Deleuze understands the theory of the death drive as Freud’s foray into “speculative philosophy,” the attempt to construct a “real” that is not given. This course will deal with the stakes of the death drive in psychoanalysis and in contemporary philosophy, focusing on some of the “myths” or speculative forms it has assumed: nirvana (Freud), “primary nature” or perpetual motion (Sade, Sacher-Masoch, Deleuze), total war (Hobbes, Schmitt, Clausewitz, Zizek), the “passion for the real” that for Badiou animates modern art and mathematical formalization as well as the Nazi genocide; nuclear fission and genetic engineering as expressions of a “scientific death drive” (Lacan, Miller), a “plasticity” at once creative and destructive (Malabou), the war of language with itself (Derrida, Miller). A common thread in each case is the need to substantiate, construct or formalize what is not given.

**COML 6865 - Contemporary Poetry and Poetics**

(crosslisted)
(also ENGL 6880)
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
Co-meets with AMST 4880 / COML 4860 / ENGL 4880 / SPAN 4880.
15183 SEM 101 R 12:20PM - 02:15PM
Monroe,J (jbm3)

What gives contemporary poetry and poetics its resonance and value? What are its dominant features, audiences, and purposes? In an increasingly global, pervasively technological culture, what's become of such familiar distinctions as the “traditional” and the “experimental,” the “mainstream” and the “alternative”? How does contemporary poetry situate itself among other genres, disciplines, discourses, and media? How are we to understand its evolving public spheres and its relation to the central cultural and historical developments of our time? With special attention to poetry since 9/11, this seminar will explore these and related questions in a range of works that open onto the rich interplay of contemporary poetry and poetics with issues concerning personal and collective identity, language, and culture.

**COML 6945 - Body Politics of African Literature** *New course!*

(crosslisted)
(also ASRC 6945, FGSS 6945)
Spring. 4 credits.
Limited to 15 students.
Co-meets with ASRC 4995 / COML 4945 / FGSS 4945.
15569 SEM 101 R 02:30PM - 04:25PM
Questions of the body and sexuality, and their intersections in the African context carry a long history of contested significations in a process of apparently ceaseless revision. In this course, we will examine how contemporary postcolonial African works engage and revise controversial issues such as the conception in nineteenth-century racist writings of the colonized as embodiment rather than subject, or as pathological and hypersexed bodies. Additionally, we will take on contemporary othering discourses around HIV/AIDS and Female Genital Cutting, the criminalization of non-conventional sexualities, and women’s uses of their bodies as modes of contestation in the postcolonial nation-state. By investigating these questions, we enter debates around human rights, storytelling, neo-colonialism, sexuality, power and resistance. As we focus on how African fiction writers have taken up questions of the body and resistance, we will also engage theorists, including but not certainly limited to Agamben, Butler, Hoa, Mbembe, Mudimbe, and Spillers, detecting the ways in which practices and discourses around bodies in the African context shape contemporary theories and vice versa.

Courses of Interest

**ENGL 2450 Close Reading: The Language of Literature**
F. Bogel  
Spring. 4 credits.  
This course is designed to introduce students to the ways language operates in written texts and to the acts we perform when we read those texts. Its aim is to prepare students for advanced work in literary studies and for a more imaginative relation to their entire verbal environment. The course will explore poems, plays, stories, and nonfictional prose, along with a variety of everyday writings: advertisements, billboards, political slogans, bumper stickers, sweatshirts, and more. We will ask such questions as: How do literary critics interpret texts? How can we distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate—or convincing and unconvincing—interpretations? Writing assignments will be exploratory and varied, focusing on details of the language of texts. Class will be conducted as a discussion.

**RUSSL 3331 - Introduction to Russian Poetry**  
(LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
15583 LEC 001 MW 02:55PM - 04:10PM  
Pollak,N (np27)  
Prerequisite: proficiency in Russian or permission of instructor. Reading in Russian; discussion in English. A survey of 19th century Russian poetry, with emphasis on the analysis of individual poems by major poets (Zhukovskii, Batyushkov, Baratynskii, Lermontov, Tiutchev, Nekrasov, Fet).

**RUSSL 3367 - The Russian Novel**  
(LA-AS)  
Spring. 4 credits.  
15584 SEM 101 MWF 01:25PM - 02:15PM  
Pollak,N (np27)  
The rise of the Russian novel in the 19th century, with particular attention to the relation between earlier (Pushkin, Lermontov) and later (Dostoevsky, Tolstoy) writers of prose fiction.
RussA Placement Test – TBA
RussA Organizational Meeting - Day: Tuesday, January 22, 2013
   Time: 4:30 – 6:00pm
   Location: Morrill Hall 102

Detailed information and schedules of the Russian language courses, as well as office hours of the instructors, are available at: russian.cornell.edu.