

## Friends of Comparative Literature

New Psalm

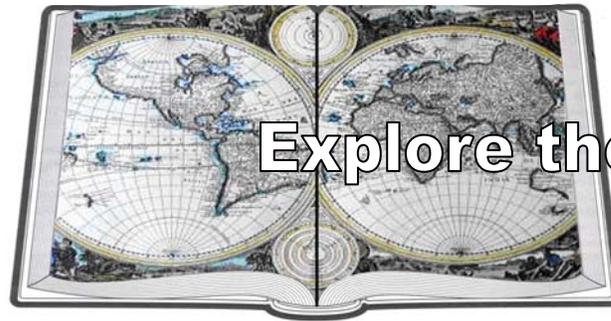
You who aspire to attain  
the gift the sands have  
you who always overlook  
the gift the sands have  
come right up to the water's edge  
and calm the waves  
you who have always had at your core  
the gift the sands have

-Nancy Morejón (trans. Pamela Carmell  
and David Frye)



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(Editor: Daniel Russell)



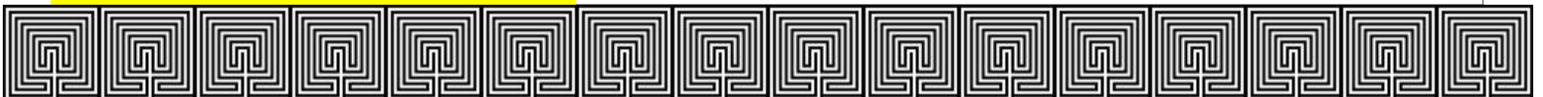
# Explore the World

News from the Coordinator Jian Xu

Cross-cultural research has become an area of increasing significance across disciplines, breaking down the borders between national and area studies, as well as between literary studies and other disciplines. Whereas Comparative Literature has long transcended the frames of reference of national and area studies, its comparativism has interestingly never entirely forfeited a certain notion about the untranslatability of literary ideas and forms. That notion, essentialist as it may seem, is also ethical: it recognizes the fundamental otherness inherent in an-other culture and the possibility of its domestication or loss in translation. Perhaps that is why Comparative Literature has always accorded supreme value to studying any literature or cultural form in its original language, because when grounded in the original language, one has a better chance of assimilating oneself to an-other culture (instead of treating it merely as an object of study). Comparativist studies thus have the capacity to overcome the subject-object relationship inherent in many cross-cultural transactions.



Time after Spring Break can feel like rushing to the semester's end. Apart from the routine schedule, we all have some delayed projects and tasks, and many deadlines to meet. I know that quite a few majors have planned to graduate this May. I want to remind you that you need to meet with your advisors (both of the College and of the Comp Lit Program) to make certain that you have fulfilled all the requirements. For those who plan to graduate next year, it is also time to discuss with your Comp Lit advisors about what courses you need to take next fall and spring, for some of our required courses are offered only once a year and some only online.



## Comp Lit News

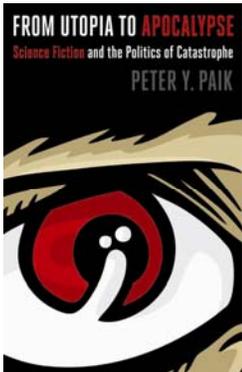
**Michelle Bolduc** is directing the Paris Study Abroad Program this semester, and loving how the students are soaking up French language and culture so quickly! Her course "Love and Death in Paris" highlights French literature in its Parisian context: for example, in conjunction with the reading of the eighteenth-century writer Rétif de la Bretonne's nocturnal wanderings, she took the students to the Catacombs, to which bodies were transferred—at night—in the same years Rétif was writing. The students were a bit surprised by the sense of art even here, especially when they saw skulls positioned in the shape of a heart.

Also, her article, "Levinas and 'Medieval' Film: Memory and Time in Marcel Carné's *Les Visiteurs du soir*," will appear in the April issue of *The French Review*.

**Joshua Hren** has a life outside being a father and TA for Comparative Literature. He is perfectly fit for both those callings but each has to share him with his commitment to the poor and disenfranchised. The staff of St. Benedict the Moor Parish in downtown Milwaukee caught Joshua on film as he explained to one of their Meal Program guests about prescription copay.



Two of Joshua's short stories, "Everything Must go" and "She Scarce is" placed in the top-25 of national literary magazine *Glimmer Train's* Fall and Winter Fiction Opens, respectively.



**Peter Paik's** book *From Utopia to Apocalypse* is available now from the University of Minnesota Press. He attended the meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association in New Orleans, and will serve as the chairman of the French, Italian and Comparative Literature Department beginning in the fall semester.

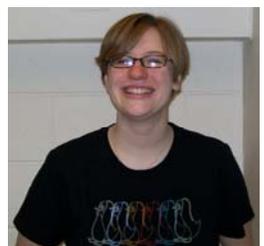
**Kristin Pitt** organized and co-chaired a seminar entitled "Bodies in Motion: Corporeality and the Representation of Immigrants, Refugees, and Other Diasporic Subjects" at the American Comparative Literature Association 2010 Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, April 1-4, 2010. During the 3-day seminar, ten scholars and students shared their research on the subject, including Kristin's presentation, "Precarious Lives: Vulnerability and Immigration in *Sin Nombre*."

**Caroline Seymour-Jorn** has been approved for advancement to the rank of Associate Professor, effective in the fall semester, and will serve as the Comparative Literature program coordinator.

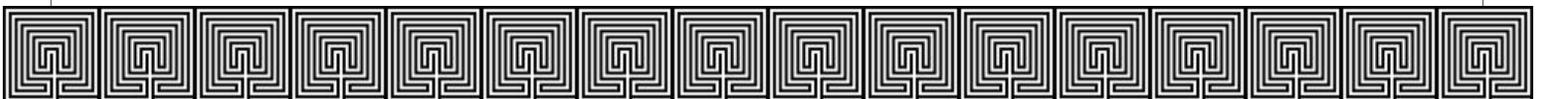
**Requiescat in Pace:** Our sympathy to Professor Swanson, whose wife died on February 22, 2010

## Student Spotlight

**Elizabeth Hahn:** When I first came to college and I began studying my major, English, I noticed that the texts we read in class were written by men from affluent backgrounds and English-speaking countries and very few women or minority writers. Minorng in Comparative Literature provides a more complete view of literature, focusing on literature from the non-English speaking world and looking at texts from a historical, political, religious and cultural perspective. Studying the literature from other regions forces me to reevaluate my values and thoughtfully consider those of another. I want to experience the world as thoroughly as I can; I spend every spare dollar on travel and (often misguided) cooking adventures.



Congratulations to John Roberts (Comp Lit Major) for making it big. He was featured in *My Midwest* magazine with great accolades "With a macabre mini masterpiece already under his belt, this young filmmaker is creeping his way to Hollywood." The article goes on, "When John Roberts won the Jury Prize at last fall's Milwaukee Film Festival, there were audible gasps in the crowd. After all, his modest animated short, *Mary's Friend* was up against local films with bigger budgets and more prestigious pedigrees... Milwaukee Film Executive Director Jonathan Jackson said the judges saw a 'gifted, innovative artist with tremendous potential in Roberts and awarded him a year-long residency."



## Favorite Literary Quotes

"A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say." -Italo Calvino

"A man's true delight is to do the things he was made for." -Marcus Aurelius

"The books that the world calls immoral books are books that show the world its own shame." -Oscar Wilde

"How beautiful it is to get up and go out and do something." -Kurt Vonnegut

## Book Recommendations

*Jeder stirbt für sich allein* (1947) (Every Man Dies Alone) was released in paperback March 2010. Hans Fallada (1893-1947), its German author, of the stature of Herman Hesse, was watched by the Nazis and even arrested by the Gestapo. His experience forms the novel based on the case of Otto and Elisa Hampel who were executed by the Nazis for dispersing postcards with anti-Nazi slogans. It is a good read along with Klaus Mann's (1906-1949) *Mephisto* (1936) and Leon Feuchtwanger's (1884-1958) *Die Geschwister Oppermann* (1933) (The Oppermanns). These novels reveal the personal and societal turmoil of the rise of Hitler's totalitarian system.

## Alumnus Profile- Joe Smith



Joe graduated with a BA Major in Comparative Literature in the summer of 1993. He went on to earn his MA in English. I didn't check the records but I believe him when he says that he took every course that Professor Roy Swanson taught during his years at UWM as a Comp Lit student. He attests that those courses changed his life and will remain forever as a proud achievement. Taking those courses unquestionably belong in the category of the best decisions he ever made.

Joe was raised on a farm, but left to pursue a career in business managing stores that sold records and music equipment. He left that after several years and joined the UWM community as a student. Joe remained at UWM after earning his MA. He now works in IT as a specialist in ordering software. We all know how important that is to our university today and how good it is to know that behind the scenes (screens) sits a humanitarian trained in Comp Lit and sensitive to what is needed to best serve the UWM community.

I noticed when he joined me for lunch to evaluate his decision to major in Comp Lit, he was carrying Elias Canetti's *Crowds and Power* (1960). He said it was a "dark" book but important to read. I asked him about his reading habits and he assured me that it is one of the most important aspects of his life and affords much good discussion with his wife. I am sure that his children will grow up with the same appreciation.

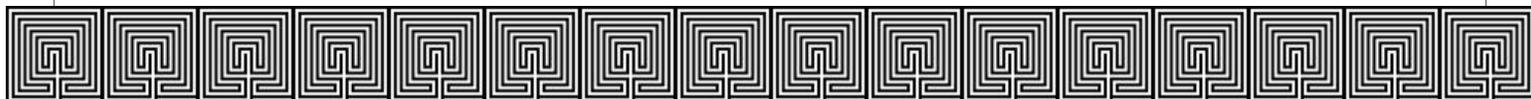
Joe is a poet. He has read his poetry around Milwaukee.

## Scholarship Opportunities

The application for the **Roy Arthur Swanson Scholarship** for undergraduate majors and minors in Comparative Literature has a deadline of April 23. This much-coveted award, made possible through the generosity of Emeritus Professor Roy A. Swanson and many colleagues and former students of the program, has brought honor to many of our students. There is an application attached to the Newsletter. Please submit the application to Professor Caroline Seymour-Jorn.

The Center for International Education (CIE) and the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies (CLACS) invite eligible undergraduate students to apply for **Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships** for study of intermediate or advanced Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, or Thai in combination with international studies. Students must enroll in 12 or more credits of coursework including at least one language course and at least one internationally-focused course during both Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 semesters. Courses may be taken at UWM or through a pre-approved study abroad program. Pending CIE's and CLACS' receipt of funding from the US Department of Education, fellowship recipients will receive up to \$10,000 for tuition and required fees and a \$5,000 subsistence allowance. More information on eligibility requirements and application procedures is available at

<http://www4.uwm.edu/cie/currentstudents/1087/>. Application deadline is noon on Friday, April 30.



## Fall 2010 Course Offerings

### **133 Contemporary Imagination in Literature and the Arts 3cr (U)**

Class Number 43227 Lec001 MWF 11-11:50am (Fountain)

Class Number 43231 Lec202 **ONLINE** (Fountain)

The goal of this course is to present the student with basic knowledge of the literary movements, authors, and texts of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This course will introduce Comparative Literature as a discipline. The students will define basic terms used in the study of the Humanities, practice literary analysis/criticism, and gain an appreciation for the problems involved in literary translation. Requirements will include reading the assigned material, class attendance, participation and assignments. Prereq: None; satisfies Humanities GER.

### **135 Experiencing Literature in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century 3cr (U)**

Class Number 48415 Lec001 MW 12:30-1:45pm (Seymour-Jorn)

This course will explore the many facets of emerging youth culture in the Arab world. We will learn about the rapidly growing "youth bulge" in the Middle East and its impact on family, society, and government through our analysis of new novels, short stories, and film emerging from the Region. Through our analyses of these art forms we will examine how young people from Morocco to Iran are re-imagining their worlds and how they are responding to trends including Islamic fundamentalism, consumer capitalism, feminism and globalization.

### **192 Freshman Seminar 3cr (U)**

Class Number 48581 Sem001 TR 11am-12:15pm (Pitt)

#### **Topic: Immigration and Exile in the Literature of the Americas**

What does it mean to be an immigrant? Salman Rushdie argues that immigrants must "make a new imaginative relationship with the world, because of the loss of familiar habits." In this course, we will attempt to better understand the experiences of immigration and exile by exploring the imaginative depictions of immigrants, refugees, exiles, and their descendants in literature and film. Through our analysis of literature and film, we will also examine the connections between immigration and several related concepts, including identity, culture, and home; security and human rights; and assimilation and hybridity. Our course readings and films will focus on representations of immigrants and refugees in the United States and elsewhere throughout North and South America. Affiliated with the interdisciplinary programs in Comparative Ethnic Studies, Cultures & Communities, and Latin American & Caribbean Studies. Open only to first-year students. Satisfies GER(HU) and the L&S Int'l req.

### **207 World Literature in Translation: Antiquity through the 1600s 3cr (U)**

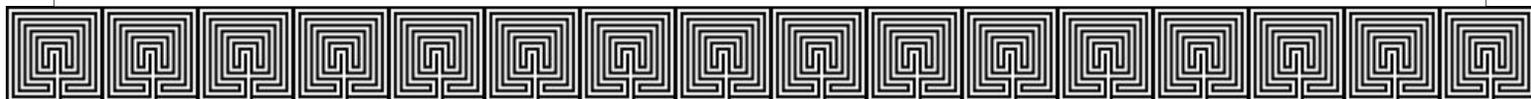
Class Number 55409 Lec201 **ONLINE** (Russell)

This course is designed to give students an introduction to works of literature from various literary traditions in the ancient, medieval, and early modern periods. This semester, we will examine how and why the human imagination conceives of the non-human, such as monsters, gods, or figures in the afterlife. In many respects, the non-human helps define what we are by showing clearly what we are not: in disowning our own incommensurate traits or desires (bodily or spiritually) by projecting them onto monstrous others and having an imaginary hero destroy or overcome them, we define who we are and what we would like to imagine ourselves to be. Topics will include the rise to civilization from bestial proto-human origins in Mesopotamian epic, monstrous obstacles overcome in the heroic epics of Homer and Vergil, transgressors who forfeit their humanity and are punished as monsters or animals, the use of monstrous imagery by authors to comment critically and satirically on their own world, and the fear that humanity creates or becomes the monsters they fear most.

### **208 World Literature in Translation: The 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century 3cr (U)**

Class Number 43233 Lec001 MW 9:30-10:45am (Seymour-Jorn)

In this course we will explore a wide range of literary genres from various locations across the globe, over a four-century period. Genres considered include the novel, drama, poetry, short story, novellas, manifestos and essays. We will explore how these various genres have been used to explore the relationship between self and society, the nature of government and power more generally, the relationship between the genders, and the colonial and post-colonial experiences. Objectives of the course include gaining general knowledge of world literature in its historical context, exploring different critical approaches to literature, and applying new critical skills through class discussion and written assignments. Prereq.: none. Satisfies L & S International Requirement.



Fall 2010 Course Offerings

**230 Literature and Society 3cr (U)**

Class Number 55411 Lec001 MWF 10-10:50am (Fountain)

**Topic: Literature of War: Children and Youth Casualties**

This course will ask questions that will penetrate to the very core of human life. We know that children are the future and how we treat them in the present will determine how they live (or not) in the future. We will examine the past years of how children were treated in WWII and see how they moved into their future (our present). We will never know how many more than 2 million children were killed in 20<sup>th</sup> century wars. But the staggering number of children sacrificed to war must cause us profound pause: the "price" for those young casualties weighs eternally upon our backs. This course will be a "pause" to remember through investigation of the vast literature narrating the plight of Jewish Children "passing", "in hiding and hidden" and "in hiding but not hidden" and the less documented plight of the victimization of the Gypsy (Roma and Sinti) children. We will uncover the forgotten victims, the Polish Children. We will learn of the uprooted children in England, of the murdered children of burned-out cities of Oradur-sur-Glane, Lidice, and Hiroshima/Nagasaki, of the Euthanasia Program directed at children with disabilities, of the medical experiments done on the children at Bullenhauser Damm and under Dr. Joseph Mengele.

Satisfies Complit Major/Minor requirements

Prereq: none

**231 Literature and Religion 3cr (U)**

Class Number 43235 Lec001 TR 9:30-10:45am (Fountain)

**Topic: Jesus Myth in Literature, Art and Film**

The focus of this course will be the Jesus Myth as it has influenced the humanities. The class will examine the representations of the Jesus Myth in Art, Literature, Music and Film. The main task will be analyzing how the Jesus Myth has interpreted society and how the society has interpreted the Jesus Myth. . At the end of the course, the student will be able to discourse academically about the Canonical and Apocraphal Gospels and the influence they have had on world cultures and societies. The students will analyze how the narratives of the major events of the life of Jesus were interpreted by Artists as different from each other as Giotto and Chagall; by Writers as different from each other as Kazantzakis, Melville and Oe; by Musicians as different from each other as Handal ("Messiah"), J.S. Bach ("St. Matthew's Passion" and "Mass in B Minor"), Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber ("Jesus Christ Superstar") and Johnny Cash; by Cinema directors as different from each other as Cecil B. DeMille, Passolini, Jewison, Zeffirelli, Scorsese, Arcand, and Mel Gibson.

Satisfies Complit Major/Minor requirements

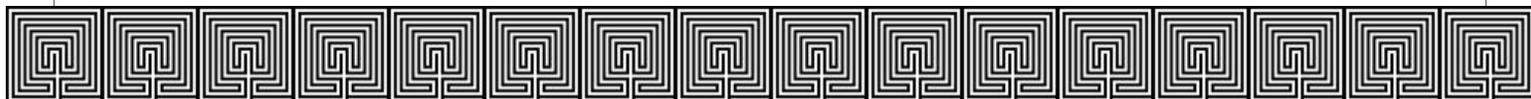
Prereq: none

**233 Literature and Film 3cr (U)**

Class Number 48557 Lec001 TR 2-3:15pm (Xu)

**Topic: Body and Desire from Hollywood to Bollywood**

The human body, by dint of its placement in culture and history, is laden with meaning. Its movement in space, posture, stylization, affect and sensation, cannot but signify. But besides this semiotic inevitability, the body also lives a life in materiality. This material body, though unsymbolizable, is intensely explored in cinema, by way of crises that endanger its being, producing narrative tension and visual fascination. This being body in crisis reveals a complex of desire, desire both as a sociohistorical imprint that structures the body's meaning and as a material transgression against that meaning. Through a group of films produced in different parts of the world, this class will study how the human body in cinema is often straddled between meaning and being, performing the paradoxical function of creating an otherness within the symbolic. We'll examine how films from different cultures stage unusual situations to call forth the material body, and what critical agency such a body often brings forth. We'll observe how such psychosomatic practices as religion (eastern), martial arts, music and dance, occult rituals, dragging, psychiatric therapy, scientific experiments, etc., mold, affect, or produce the body's meaning and desire, and how film diegesis mediates that meaning and desire through its own cultural codes. The objective of our study is to discover how this unique cinematic body opens up dimensions of truth we do not normally see, truth that undermines the entrenched norms of society by overstepping many boundaries, from those of race, class, gender, sex, to what it means to be human. The course satisfies the international requirement.



## Fall 2010 Course Offerings

### 350 Topics in Comparative Literature 3cr (U/G)

Class Number 48591 Lec001 TR 2-3:15pm (Pitt)

#### Topic: Border-Crossing and Migration in Literature and Film

This course will explore narratives of immigration through a close examination of border-crossing and migration. What does it mean to cross a border, and how is it represented in literature and film? Through our investigation of borders, we will also deepen our understanding of a wide range of contemporary discourses, including nationalism, exile, diaspora, security, human rights, hybridity, transnationalism, globalization, race, gender, community, and identity. Course texts will include fiction, autobiography, critical and theoretical essays, and film. Affiliated with the interdisciplinary programs in Comparative Ethnic Studies, Global Studies (Communication and Security tracks), International Studies and Latin American & Caribbean Studies. Satisfies the L&S Int'l req.

### 360 Seminar in Literature and Cultural Experience 3cr (U/G)

Class Number 55942 Sem001 MW 12:30-1:45pm (Williams)

#### Topic: The Literature of the Apostle Paul

This course is designed as a historical-literary, exegetical and ideological investigation into the life and thought (theology) of the Apostle Paul. It will investigate the "historical" Paul through the seven letters he wrote and the letters attributed to him. The Paul of legend and ecclesiastical tradition will be explored through literature written about him in the second and third centuries. This course will also explore the importance of the history of the interpretation of Paul and his literature, especially in the modern era.

### 362 Transnational Asian Cinema 3cr (U/G)

Class Number 55410 Lec001 TR 11am-12:15pm (XU)

#### Topic: New Chinese Cinemas

A great number of high-quality films emerged in the Chinese language cinemas in the past three decades. These films rebelled against the conventional film codes in their effort to produce new paradigms of artistic expression. The course will study how the formal innovations of these films bring about a new aesthetics that is germane to the temporal and spatial experience of rapid changes on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Our attention to film language and form will extend to the issues of cultural representation and we will study how, as economic developments have transformed both social structures and the normative codes by which social relations are formed and regulated, the cinematic imagination of today's Chinese-speaking world has also been altering cultural parameters and patterns of imagery, opening new visions, and forming new identities. Based on analytical studies of selected films, the course will explore the formation of a new film culture that has become increasingly transnational. The course satisfies the international requirement.

### 457 Topics in French and Francophone Studies in Translation 3cr (U/G)

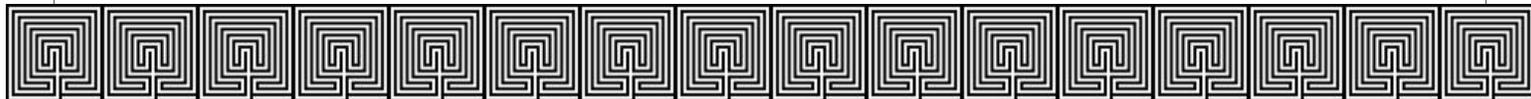
Class Number 56618 Lec001 W 4:30-7:10pm (Ney)

#### Topic: French Writers Without Borders

What does it mean for a French novelist to write about, Asia, America or for that matter about the Americas? Why choose New York, Mexico, the Sierra Madre, Tokyo, or even Patagonia as a destination? Who is the writer addressing or conversing with? And why does s/he need to travel to the Americas? This seminar explores the idea that Asia and the Americas have been a source of constant fascination and inspiration for a section of French literature that writes itself in imagining new worlds of becoming. We will explore a representative array of the literary Asian and American images that have been produced in 20<sup>th</sup> century French literature. In the end, we will determine the kind of relationship that is established through these images between the writer's country of origin and the Asian and American spaces s/he is visiting and discovering.

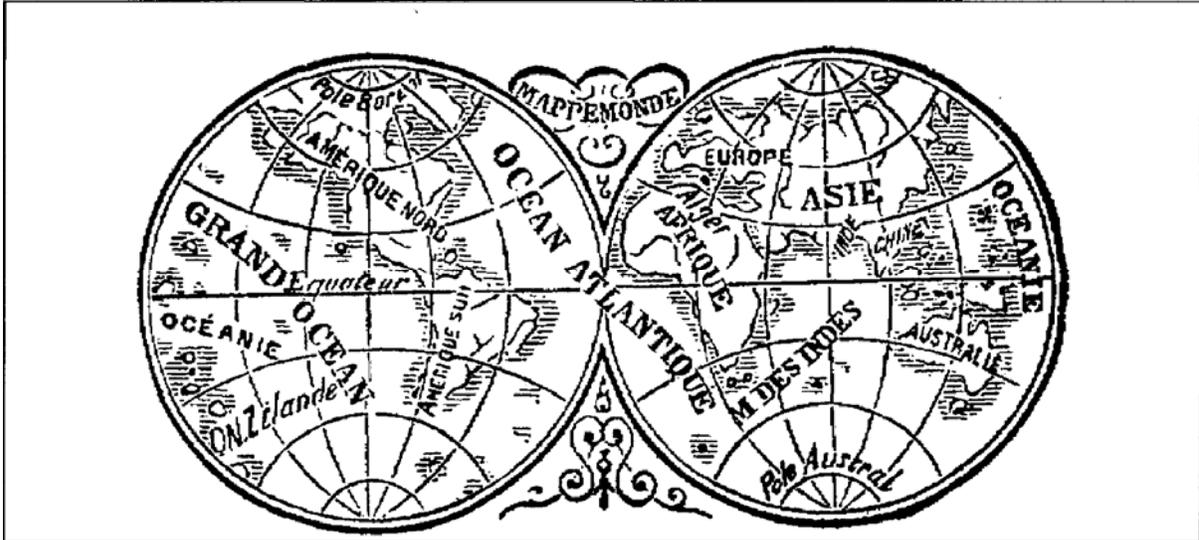
## Invitation to Consider a Comparative Literature Major/Minor

Comparative Literature is a discipline that will complement whatever course of study students choose and will be an impressive addition to any Résumé. The skills learned in Comparative Literature classes will benefit beyond reading literature for enjoyment to reading and analyzing journals, history, etc. We would invite you to consider CompLit as a Major (30 Credits of CompLit courses) or Minor (18 Credits of CompLit courses). For more information, talk with your instructor or ask the staff in Curtin 772.



## Roy Arthur Swanson Merit Scholarship in Comparative Literature

University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee  
Annual Merit Scholarship: Comparative Literature  
Department of French, Italian and Comparative Literature  
The UWM Foundation



*The Comparative Literature program has established a Merit Scholarship in honor of Professor Roy Arthur Swanson, whose scholarship and teaching excellence constitute an example for students whose love of literature leads them to the discipline that he has fostered and promoted.*

*Current award:*

\$500 for UWM tuition and academic expenses during the 2010-2011 academic year.

*Eligibility:*

1. Attendance at UWM with a declared major or minor in Comparative Literature.
2. A grade-point average of 3.5 or higher in Comparative Literature courses.

*Application:*

Submit your name, your address and a recent UWM transcript copy to:

Prof. Caroline Seymour-Jorn  
Department of French, Italian and Comparative Literature  
Curtin Hall 772

Use the form provided on the reverse side. A special committee will check all applications and inform all applicants of its decision in the merit competition. Please submit a brief statement in explanation of your commitment to the discipline of Comparative Literature.

*Deadline: April 23, 2010*

**APPLICATION FORM**  
**Roy Arthur Swanson Merit Scholarship in Comparative Literature**

Please consider me a candidate for this year's award.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a   major   minor   (circle one) in Comparative Literature.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have enclosed a copy of my UWM transcript.

Deadline for submission application:       April 23, 2010

**Statement of Commitment**  
**to the discipline of Comparative Literature:**