

## Report on curriculum initiative in Comparative Literature

(Submitted by Jonathan Mayhew, Department of Spanish and Portuguese)

### Committee Members:

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Our proposal is to offer a Graduate Certificate in Comparative Literature, one that would be appropriate for doctoral students in English or Foreign Languages. The certificate would require twelve hours: there would be a core course, an Introduction to Comparative Literature that would cover the history of the discipline as well as recent trends. In addition, a student would take at least one other course in literary theory and at least one graduate level course in each of two languages, apart from his or her primary field. A student specializing in English literature, for example, would need to take courses in at least two other languages other than English. A student doing Spanish as a primary field might take one course in English literature and another in French or Portuguese.

*Resources:* there are many faculty members in several departments who have degrees in Comparative Literature and/or substantial interests in this field. In the Spanish Department alone there are four PhD in Comparative Literature, and faculty from Western Civilization, Slavic Languages, German, and Italian have also expressed interest in this proposal. The addition of this certificate would require minimal resources, since it would work within existing structures. The only additional course required would be the core Introduction to Comparative Literature. The recent creation of SLLC provides a natural institutional home for this program.

*Target audience:* while we do not anticipate a large number of students, this proposal would be ideally suited to students who have substantial interests in more than one national literature and sufficient linguistic competence to undertake graduate work in at least two languages other than English.

*Benefits:* Currently, the University of Kansas has no program of any kind in Comparative Literature, despite the considerable expertise of the Faculty. Students with interest in more than one language can do a minor at the PhD level, and demonstrate linguistic competence in other ways, but they cannot. This proposal would also benefit faculty members with substantial interests in the comparative study of literature and culture by providing additional opportunities for intellectual dialogue. The Introduction to Comparative Literature might provide an opportunity for guest lectures and other forms of cross-departmental exchanges.