



COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

» You've probably read "Of Mice and Men." So, how does that novel connect to lyrics by The Police, Bruce Springsteen and Rage Against the Machine? Maybe you've also waded through Homer's "Odyssey." So how did themes from that epic poem influence frontier mentality in the American West? That's right. Comparative literature is more than just contrasting printed texts. This field offers a unique way to interpret culture and society.

At the College of Charleston, our program incorporates courses from across the academic spectrum. You'll study English literature, of course, but you'll also have the chance to study literature in translation, including works by authors in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Russian, Hindi, Greek, Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic. In addition, you can choose courses from Classics, theatre, music and art.

It's important to know that studies in comparative literature will complement a major in, say, sociology, just as well as a major in art history, economics, mathematics or secondary education. And, it's one of five possible concentrations for the major in international studies. How versatile is the study of comparative literature? Consider two recent student research projects:

- » women's and gender issues understood through an analysis of contemporary French prose
- » African American literature as a reflection of alienation and assimilation in 1900.

The true advantage of this program is that it examines the values, life experiences and beliefs of people from other cultures through their written works. Doing that can help you acquire knowledge as well as important skills. Studying literature will hone anyone's ability to analyze and express, and no other tools will enhance your employment prospects more. As economies become increasingly more connected across the globe, businesses, institutions and foundations are looking to hire individuals who are knowledgeable and conversant about cultures beyond their own.

So, how did Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged" influence Fortune 500 CEOs around the globe? Check out comparative literature and find out for yourself.

"In any career, it's vital to know other cultures. One of the best ways to do that is by studying literature. Comparative literature brings you into contact with works you wouldn't encounter in traditional lit courses. Ultimately, it offers a perspective that is essential in our multicultural society and increasingly interconnected world.

– Konstantin Vengerowsky '09