



October 21, 2015

Dear Meg,

At our meeting on October 12, 2015, the Arts and Humanities panel reviewed the revisions to the Comparative Studies major. A significant drop in majors prompted an extensive assessment of the program that revealed students' frustration with the complexity of and inconsistencies in the structure of the major, and a feeling that there were too many choices required of the students. This major revision responded to the data by: a) simplifying and clarifying pathways through the major b) establishing consistency across the concentrations c) ensuring that they can regularly offer the classes that their students need d) emphasizing the strengths of the department identified by the students, and e) Increasing student/faculty interaction outside the classroom.

The department has reorganized their courses, such that in the revised major:

- students ideally begin with the new one-credit course (CS 2099), which is intended to orient them to the curriculum, introduce them to the faculty in a relatively informal setting, and teach them more about research, study abroad, and other opportunities outside the classroom. (Note that this course has been approved with a contingency, and the panel has not yet heard how the department would like to proceed with this course. If approved, it would raise the number of credits required for the major to 37.)
- courses have been renumbered so that students then advance through an organized procession of introductory courses at the 2000-level, topical or theorizing courses at the 3000-level, and a set of research-oriented classes at the 4000-level.
- the distinction between *Foundation courses* and *Interdisciplinary/Thematic/Comparative courses* no longer exists, as courses that were listed in the *Foundation* section of the existing major have in most cases been moved to the Core section of the proposed major, and courses in the *Interdisciplinary/Thematic/Comparative* category have been shifted to either Core or Elective courses.
- each of the proposed concentrations requires an introductory course

Besides reorganizing courses, the following additional changes have been made:

- Six concentrations in the major have been reduced to five by eliminating Religious Studies, which is now a separate major.
- In the existing major, the structures of the concentrations varied significantly, but in the proposed major these structures have been brought in line with each other, with only

minor variations remaining. Each concentration now has the same structure of 4 required courses, 3 of which are identical.

- Each concentration now has a limited number of core courses that constitute the center of each student's major and a reduced number of Elective courses that build on the core. This was done in response to student concerns about a lack of direction that comes from too many options and the lack of consistent offerings of all the listed courses
- The World Literature major focuses on literatures in translation. In order to limit the overlap between WL and CL, the concentration in Comparative Literature no longer requires courses in translation studies.

These revisions were unanimously approved without comments or contingencies.

Sincerely,

Janice M. Aski