European Cultural Studies

Objectives

European cultural studies (ECS) offers students the opportunity to study English and continental literature in translation in conjunction with one or more related disciplines: fine arts, history, music, philosophy, politics, sociology, and theater arts. Students will be able to count appropriate courses taken in clusters toward the ECS major.

ECS is for those students who feel intellectually adventurous, who want to explore the interrelationships of literature with various other disciplines in order to gain a broader perspective of what constitutes "culture." With the advent of an everchanging Europe, students in ECS will be better prepared, in all areas, to keep abreast with current and future events.

Many of our students spend some time abroad to get a feel for the cultures in which they are most interested. ECS majors have gone on to graduate schools (in history, politics, English, and other fields), have entered law school, business school, and advanced programs in international studies.

How to Become a Major

It is highly advisable that students make a decision no later than the middle of their sophomore year in order to take full advantage of the ECS major.

Normally, students will choose to focus on either the early period (from the Middle Ages to the mid-1700s) or the modern period (from mid-1700s to the present day). Variations within the scheme can be worked out with the coordinator.

Each major will plan a program in consultation with the coordinator.

Committee

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<tr>
<th>Stephen Dowden</th>
<th>Coordinator and Undergraduate Advising Head</th>
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<td>(German, Russian, and East Asian Languages and Literature)</td>
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<td>Rudolph Binion</td>
<td>(History)</td>
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<td>Dian Fox</td>
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<td>Jane Hale</td>
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<td>Gila Hayim</td>
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<td>Arthur Holmberg</td>
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<td>Edward Kaplan</td>
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<td>Richard Lansing</td>
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<td>Robin Feuer Miller</td>
<td>German, Russian, and East Asian Languages and Literature</td>
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<td>Paul Morrison</td>
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<td>Jessica Ann Owens</td>
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<td>Antony Polonsky</td>
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Requirements for the Major

The major consists of 10 semester courses (11 if the student elects to write a thesis).

A. ECS 100a or b (The Proseminar), to be completed, if possible, no later than the junior year.

B. Two comparative literature seminars, or HUM 10a (The Western Canon) and one comparative literature seminar. The student is particularly encouraged to select this second course from COML 102a through COML 106b. Any COML offering is acceptable, however, as long as its subject matter is European and it is otherwise relevant to the student’s program.

C. Three courses in European literature. The six European literatures offered are English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. The foreign literature courses listed below have been specifically designed for use in the ECS curriculum and are taught in translation. Courses in English literature may be used to fulfill this requirement. For courses in comparative literature consult the appropriate section of this Bulletin.

D. Three courses selected from the following seven related disciplines: fine arts, history, history of ideas, music, philosophy, politics, sociology, and theater arts. In consultation with the coordinator, students may be able to use courses from additional departments (e.g., NEJS, anthropology, etc.) so long as such courses are appropriate to the student’s program in ECS.

E. Students who elect to write a Senior Thesis will enroll in ECS 99d. Before enrolling, students should consult with the coordinator. An appropriate GPA is required to undertake the writing of a thesis. Honors are awarded on the basis of cumulative GPA in the major and the grade on the honors thesis.

F. All seniors not enrolling in ECS 99d (that is, not electing to write a Senior Thesis) have a choice of electing one additional course in any of the three segments of the major: either an additional course in comparative literature, or an additional course in any of the six European literatures, or an additional course in any of the seven related areas.
Special Notes Relating to Undergraduates

Courses in the seven related disciplines are generally available for ECS majors. Any questions should be addressed directly to the appropriate representative of the department [fine arts, Ms. Scott; history, Mr. Binion; music, Ms. Owens; philosophy, Mr. Samet; politics, Ms. Klausen; sociology, Ms. Hayim; theater arts, Mr. Holmberg].

ECS majors are encouraged to pursue study abroad, either in England or on the continent. Credit will be applied for appropriate equivalent courses. Interested students should consult with the coordinator and the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs.

Courses of Instruction

[1-99] Primarily for Undergraduate Students

ECS 98a Independent Study
May be taken only by majors with the written permission of the ECS program coordinator. Usually offered every year.

ECS 98b Independent Study
May be taken only by majors with the written permission of the ECS program coordinator. Usually offered every year.

ECS 99d Senior Thesis
Independent research under the supervision of the thesis director. Usually offered every year.

Special Note About Courses

The following courses are appropriate for the ECS major and his or her respective foreign literature majors: French, German, Russian, and Spanish. The course abbreviations have the following values:

FECS = French and European Cultural Studies
GECS = German and European Cultural Studies
IECS = Italian and European Cultural Studies
RECS = Russian and European Cultural Studies
SECS = Spanish and European Cultural Studies

Special Note About Courses

FECS 115a French Existentialism: An Introduction
[hum] Open to all students. Conducted in English. Readings and essays in French for French majors.

FECS 100b European Cultural Studies
Proseminar: Making of European Modernity
[hum wi] May not be repeated for credit by students who took ECS 100a in the spring semester with Mr. Randall in prior years.

FECS 100a European Cultural Studies
Proseminar: Modernism
[hum wi] Explores the interrelationship of literature, music, painting, philosophy, and other arts in the era of high modernism. Works by Artaud, Baudelaire, Benjamin, Mann, Mahler, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Kandinsky, Schiele, Beckett, Brecht, Adorno, Sartre, Heidegger and others. Usually offered every fall semester.

FECS 117a Jewish Identities in France since 1945
[hum] Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation with French originals available.

FECS 100a European Cultural Studies
Proseminar: Making of European Modernity
[hum wi] May not be repeated for credit by students who took ECS 100a in the spring semester with Mr. Randall in prior years.

FECS 157a French Film
[hum] Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. May be repeated for credit with special permission. Refer to the Schedule of Classes each semester for additional topic description.

Topic for spring 2005 is The New Wave: Impact and Influence. The French cinematic innovations of the 1950s and 1930s known as the New Wave transformed both French and international cinema. Looks at work by some key New Wave filmmakers [Melville, Varda, Truffaut, Godard, Resnais, Chabrol, Rohmer] in their relation to international and American film. Also compares certain New Wave films to much later films by the same filmmaker. Usually offered every third year.

French

FECS 115a French Existentialism: An Introduction
[hum] Open to all students. Conducted in English. Readings and essays in French for French majors.

Sartre and Camus are known as the founders of French existentialism, a philosophy of the absurd, radical freedom, and responsibility. Studies them and other writers on ethnic and female identity in light of war, colonialism, and the Holocaust. Usually offered every third year.

Mr. Kaplan
German

**GECS 118a Seduction and Enlightenment**

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. This course may not be repeated for credit by students who have taken GECS 108a in previous years.

Explores the dialectic of reason and the irrational from the late 18th century in Germany and Austria until their collapse in World War I. Works by Beethoven, Kant, Mendelssohn, Goethe, Lessing, Mozart, Heine, Novalis, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Thomas Mann, and others. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. von Mering

**GECS 119b Nietzsche to Postmodernism**

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. This course may not be repeated for credit by students who have taken GECS 109b in previous years.

Explores the dialectic of reason and the irrational from the late 19th century in Germany and Austria to the present. Works by Adorno, Benjamin, Brecht, Celan, Habermas, Heidegger, Junger, Kiefer, Thomas, and Heinrich Mann, Nietzsche, Schoenberg, Spengler, and Expressionist painting and film. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Dowden

**GECS 150a From Rapunzel to Riefenstahl: Real and Imaginary Women in German Culture**

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. Exploring German cultural representations of women and real women’s responses. From fairy-tale princess to Nazi filmmaker, from 18th-century infanticide to 20th-century femme fatale, from beautiful soul to feminist dramatist, from revolutionary to minority writer. Readings include major literary works, feminist criticism, and film. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. von Mering

**GECS 155a Modern German Jewish History**

Course to be taught at Brandeis summer program in Berlin.

Study of Germany and the European Jews from the period of emancipation in the late 18th and early 19th century to the present. Examines the role of German Jews in German politics, economic life, and culture, the rise of anti-Semitism in the 19th century, the Nazi government’s anti-Jewish policies to the post-war period. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Sheppard and Ms. von Mering

**GECS 160a In the Shadow of the Holocaust: Global Encounters**

Traces the experience of German exiles in different parts of the world. Addresses issues of identity, linguistic displacement, problems of integration, post-colonial encounters, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, nostalgia, and the experience of those who eventually returned to Germany. Usually offered every third year.

Ms. von Mering

**GECS 167a German Cinema: Vamps and Angels**

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. This course may not be repeated for credit by students who have taken GECS 165a in fall of 2001.

From silent film to Leni Riefenstahl and Nazi cinema, from post-war cinema in East and West to New German film after unification, this course traces aesthetic strategies, reflections on history, memory, subjectivity, political, cultural, and film-historical contexts with an emphasis on gender issues. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. von Mering

**GECS 170a Viennese Modernism 1890-1938**


Mr. Dowden

**GECS 180b European Modernism and the German Novel**

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. A study of selected novelists writing after Nietzsche and before the end of World War II; a multi-faceted confrontation with German history and organized amnesia that has continued into the present. Works by Koeppen, Grass, Johnson, Bernhard, Handke, Bachmann, Seghers, Treichel, Sebald, and others. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Dowden

**GECS 185a Dante’s Divine Comedy**

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation.

A close study of the entire poem—Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso—as a symbolic vision of reality reflecting the culture and thought—political, philosophical, theological—of the Middle Ages. Readings will include two minor works, the Vita Nuova and World Government. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Lansing
Russian

RECS 130a The Russian Novel

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. A comprehensive survey of the major writers and themes of the 19th century including Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and others. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Miller

RECS 131a Nature, Man and Machine: Twentieth-Century Russian Literature

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. An introduction to the major works and authors of Modernist, Soviet, and post-Soviet eras, including the Emigration. Readings include works by Mayakovsky, Bely, Babel, Bulgakov, Nabokov, Akhmatova, Solzhenitsyn, and Pelevin. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Powelstock

RECS 134b Chekhov

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. Offers a detailed investigation of the evolution of Chekhov’s art, emphasizing the thematic and structural aspects of Chekhov’s works. Attention paid to methods of characterization, use of detail, narrative technique, and the roles into which he casts his audience. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Miller

RECS 135a From Pushkin to Chekhov: The Short Story in Russia

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. Focuses on the great tradition of the short story in Russia. This genre has always invited stylistic and narrative experimentation, as well as being a vehicle for the striking, if brief, expression of complex social, religious, and philosophical themes. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Miller

RECS 137a Women in Russian Literature

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. Examines questions of female representation and identity, and of female authorship. Readings include portrayals of women by men and women authors. Usually offered every second year. Staff

RECS 146a Dostoevsky: Gods and Monsters

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. A comprehensive survey of Dostoevsky’s life and works, with special emphasis on the major novels. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Miller

RECS 147b Tolstoy: Freedom, Chance, and Necessity

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. Studies the major short stories and novels of Leo Tolstoy against the backdrop of 19th-century history and with reference to 20th-century critical theory. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Miller

RECS 148a Russian Drama

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. This course may not be repeated for credit by students who have taken RUS 148a and RUS 148b in previous years. Examines the rich tradition of Russian drama and theater. Readings include masterpieces of the 19th and 20th centuries, including those by Chekhov, Pushkin, Gogol, Ostrovsky, Mayakovsky, Erdman, and others. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Powelstock

RECS 149b The Rise and Fall of Russian Modernism: Cultural and Political Revolutions 1900-1934

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. An interdisciplinary immersion in the period, emphasizing the connections between historical and artistic trends, and employing prominent theories of culture. Focuses on major figures, works and events in film, literature, the performing and visual arts, and political, philosophical and religious thought. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Powelstock

RECS 154a Nabokov

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. A concentrated study of Vladimir Nabokov, the most noted Russian author living in emigration and one of the most influential novelists of the 20th century. Focuses on the major novels. Usually offered every second year. Mr. Powelstock

RECS 155a From Witches to Wood Spirits: Russian Culture to 1800

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian. Explores the relationship of culture to society and religion in Russia through the 18th century. Examines the interactions of diverse forms of artistic expression, presenting examples from visual art, music, architecture, and popular culture, giving special attention to Russia’s rich folk heritage. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Chevalier

Spanish

SECS 150a Golden Age Drama and Society

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. The major works, comic and tragic, of Spain’s 17th-century dramatists. Texts may include Cervantes’s brief witty farces, Tirso’s creation of the “Don Juan” myth, Lope’s palace and “peasant honor” plays, and Calderon’s Baroque masterpieces, which culminate Spain’s Golden Age. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Fox

SECS 169a Travel Writing and the Americas: Columbus’s Legacy

Open to all students. Conducted in English with readings in English translation. Following the arrival of Columbus, the continent later known as America engaged with other continents in a mutual process of cultural, historical, geographical, and economic representation. The development of some of those representations is explored, beginning with travel writing and ending with recent images of the Encounter. Usually offered every second year. Ms. Pérez
Cross-Listed Courses

A Selected List of Courses

For comparative literature, consult the comparative literature offerings in this Bulletin; for English literature, consult the offerings under the Department of English and American Literature.

The following courses from the various departments associated with ECS represent, in most instances, a mere selection from among the total courses in that department that “count” toward the completion of the ECS major. For full descriptions consult the appropriate department. Be sure to consult the offerings under the Department of Theater Arts for ECS courses although they are not cross-listed. Check with the coordinator for a listing.

FA 40b
The Formation of Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Art

FA 58b
High and Late Renaissance in Italy

FA 60a
Baroque in Italy and Spain

FA 70a
Paris/New York: Revolutions of Modernism

FA 71a
Modern Art and Modern Culture

FA 170b
Nineteenth-Century European Painting and Sculpture

FA 177b
Twentieth-Century European Art and Architecture in Berlin

HIST 52b
Europe from 1789 to the Present

HIST 132a
European Thought and Culture: Marlowe to Mill

HIST 132b
European Thought and Culture since Darwin

HIST 133b
Rights and Revolutions: History of Natural Rights

MUS 42a
The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach

MUS 45a
Beethoven

MUS 56b
Romanticism and Music

MUS 57a
Music and Culture: From Romanticism to the Modern Era

MUS 65a
Music, the Arts, and Ideas in Fin-de-Siecle Vienna

PHIL 113b
Aesthetics: Painting, Photography, and Film

PHIL 138a
Metaphysics

POL 11b
Introduction to Comparative Government: Europe

POL 156b
West European Political Systems

POL 194a
Politics and the Novel

SOC 10b
Introduction to Sociological Theory

SOC 141a
Marx and Freud

SOC 164a
Existential Sociology