To be adopted: Proposed Changes to French Major

PRESENT:

1. CPLT 001 or CPLT 001W, CPLT 002
2. Language proficiency (16 units) - FREN 075, FREN 101A, FREN 101B, FREN 101C
3. Eight courses (32 units) of upper-division electives in the French Program. Of these the student must choose a minimum of five courses (20 units) offered entirely in French. Students may petition to take one course (4 units) outside of the French Program on a related topic. It is strongly encouraged that students take at least one class focusing on a time period earlier than 1800. It is highly recommended that students complete FREN 101B and FREN 101C before enrolling in upper-division electives.
4. CPLT 193 (4 units). (CPLT 196 strongly recommended but not required)

PROPOSED:

1. CPLT 001 or CPLT 001W, or 1 lower-division CPLT course (8 units)
2. No change
3. No change
4. No change

Justification:

This is to change a core requirement for the literatures and languages majors in the Department of Comparative Literature and Languages. These majors (Chinese, Classical Studies, Comparative Ancient Civilizations, Comparative Literature, French, German Studies, Japanese, Languages, and Russian) share a required curricular rubric which trains students in the basic skills and sensibilities for literary and cultural studies. This rubric of courses is: CPLT 1 (“Introduction to Close Reading”); CPLT 2 (“Reading World Literature”); CPLT 193 (“Capstone Research Seminar”). Our faculty have noted that while the framing CPLT 1/CPLT 193 creates and maintains a curricular coherency and a linkage in concepts and reading and writing practices across time for our students, that CPLT 2 does not; rather, CPLT 2 can tend to offer a sampling of literary readings across world literary traditions, and an introduction to the notion of “world literature” (itself a problematic and much-debated concept), yet without introducing students to the depth and vibrancy of any one of those traditions in a meaningful way. We therefore have determined, as a collective to remove the CPLT 2 requirement and replace it with any lower-division, elective CPLT course, reflected here as “1 lower-division CPLT course.” It is our shared conviction that students will significantly benefit from this curricular change, because, rather than a more superficial reading of a number of texts across traditions, students will have the opportunity to study a single literary tradition or literary-comparative problem, theme, or field of texts in details. This will, in our shared view, expose students to a tradition or literary language which may not be their chosen area of focus for their major,
and which will enrich their intellectual experience in the College for this reason; it will also provide a counterpoint, and an opening onto what is, for the student, a new literary tradition or theme, which they will not have studied before, and which will allow them to think about their chosen major in a new light. Finally, these courses will provide a bridge between CPLT 1 and students’ upper-division course work in their chosen areas of focus, and it will enable and support the shift in sensibility, reading style, and writing approach, required as students move from CPLT 1 to more sustained study at the upper-division level, all of which culminates in CPLT 193, where students produced a sustained piece of literary-critical writing in their chosen area of specialization under the guidance of department faculty. While the requirement “1 lower-division CPLT course” is listed in these terms for ease of recognition and application, we regularly offer a number of courses that fill this requirement, including: CPLT 23 (“Modern Japan and Personal Narrative”); CPLT 25 (“Introduction to Science Fiction”); CPLT 26 (“Introduction to Literature, Film, and Art by French and Francophone Women”); CPLT 27 (“Food and Film”); CPLT 28 (“Justice, Law, Violence”); CPLT 30 (“Introduction to Chinese Civilization”); CPLT 40 (“Literary response to Disaster and Repression”); CPLT 48 (“Chinese Cinema”); CPLT 62 (“Introduction to Southeast Asian Literature”); CPLT 63 (“Reading Southeast Asian Stories”); CPLT 70 (“Introduction to African Literature”); among others.

Approvals:
Approved by the faculty of the Department of Comparative Literature & Languages: November 23, 2020
Approved by the Executive Committee of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences: February 15, 2021
Approved by the Committee on Educational Policy: April 5, 2021