

June 2025 Comparative Literature Newsletter

A Word from Professor Beate Allert, Director of Comparative Literature



Early in January 2025, several of us Comparative Literature faculty from Purdue University met at the Modern Language Association Convention in New Orleans and presented in the context of this annual international conference a variety individual papers contributing to panels on topics such as world literature and culture studies to the reception of particular authors and poets in recent scholarship, administrative and curriculum questions, artificial intelligence, Digital Humanities, and more. Here is a picture of Hilton New Orleans Riverside hotel right on the banks of the Mississippi River where MLA events took place.



The Purdue University contingent of presenters at MLA included Professors Ahmed Idrissi Alami, Kim Yonsoo, Song No, Pedro Bassoe, Jen William, Cara Kinnally, Shaun Hughes, and Beate Allert on individual topics.

Professor Pedro Bassoe presenting his paper: "Global Trajectories of Fantasy: Lafcadio Hearn in New Orleans and Japan" in the picture below:

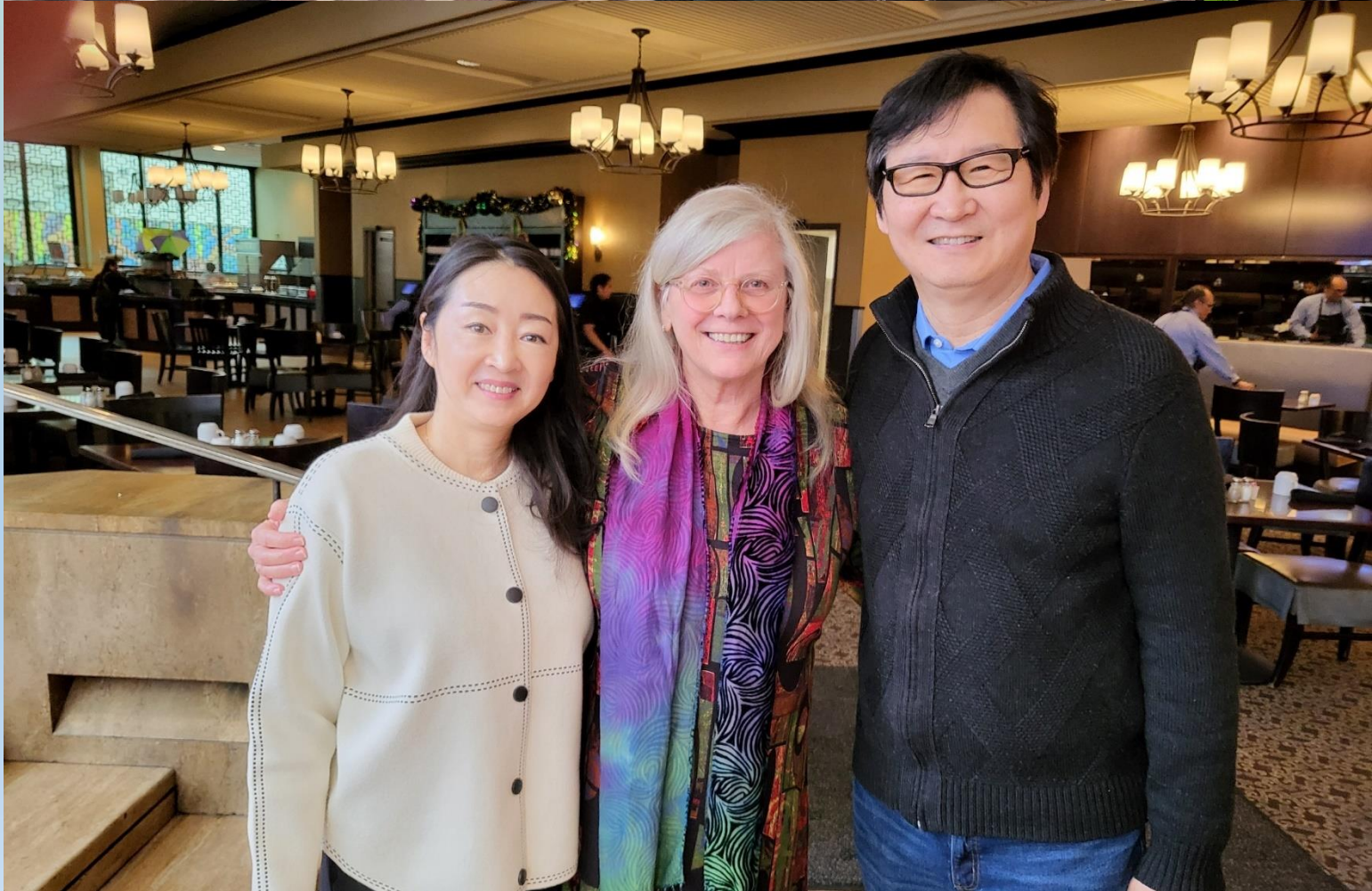


Professor Kim Yonsoo speaking at the Roundtable: “Teaching Medical Humanities” (picture below):



Professor Jen William, Head of SLC to which CMPL belongs, speaking at the Roundtable: “Advocating for World Languages: A Cheat Sheet for Difficult Conversations with Administrators” addressed relevant issues surrounding artificial intelligence and the best uses and responses to AI in language and literature education. See Professor Jen William on the microphone second person from the

right in the first picture below and see Professors Kim Yonsoo, Beate Allert, and Song No in a gathering between sessions in the second picture below.



This time is marked by many changes on many different levels: a new American president, a new Pope, a new Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue University, and many exciting events and progress reports in our Comparative Literature program: Gwénaél Jouin completed his PhD with a doctoral dissertation in May 2025 with major professor Angelica Duran (see below), Ching-Jen Sun received a Bilsland Scholarship 2025-2026 having completed two substantial dissertation chapters with major professor Aparajita Sagar. Andrew Kroninger, with Jeffrey Turco as major professor, completed research for his dissertation in CMPL at the Marbach Archives in Germany and in the Vienna libraries in Austria last year with the support of a PRF grant and this spring Andrew received a SLC Excellence of Teaching Award. Marisa English (with Prof. Shaun Hughes) and Sarah Jaran (with Prof. Michael Johnston) completed their Prelims and Prospectus Defenses with much applause and are now ABDs. Diana Torres Aries (with Cara Kinally and Maren Linett co-chairing her committee as major professors) and Xiaoyang Guo (with Hongjian Wang and Pedro Bassoe co-chairing his committee) both have publications and public presentations to report (see below). Also Anurati Dutta and Rida Altaf (with her continued Fullbright Fellowship) presented at various conferences and everyone had travel support, either via a PROMISE grant from the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue, or directly from the School of Languages.

Undergraduate majors in CMPL include Alexa Sky Berriola, Jessie Noah Boggs, Nikki Lewis, Abigail Little, Candace Rosemeier, and T. Stahly. Professor William has also informed us that Jose Alfredo and Angela Vizcardo have newly been admitted into the undergraduate Comparative Literature program, starting this fall:

Current Comparative Literature Undergraduates

Name	Major
Berriola, Alexa	Comparative Literature - BA
Boggs, Noah	Comparative Literature - BA
Kirby, Riley	Comparative Literature - BA, Film & Video Studies - BA
Lewis, Nikki	Comparative Literature - BA, Creative Writing - BA, English - BA

Little, Abigail
Rosemeier, Candace
Stahly, T

Comparative Literature - BA
Comparative Literature - BA
Comparative Literature -
BA, English - BA

Congratulations to T. Stahly who won the best senior award for CMPL this spring 2025!

Our deep thanks goes to Professor Daniel Hsieh who has retired and will always be remembered as a wonderful colleague and adviser to many Comparative Literature students over the years. He gave a farewell lecture on "Tao Yuanming's (365-427) "Drinking Wine" ("Yin jiu" 飲酒) no. 5: The Story of a Poem."



SLC FACULTY COLLOQUIUM, SC 239

FEBRUARY 25
3:00 – 4:00

DANIEL HSIEH

TAO YUANMING'S (365–427)
"DRINKING WINE"
("YIN JIU" 飲酒)
NO. 5: THE STORY OF A POEM

ABSTRACT: IN THE EARLY FIFTH CENTURY, THE PASTORAL POET, TAO YUANMING (365–427), WROTE A SERIES OF TWENTY DRINKING POEMS. THE FIFTH POEM OF THE SERIES WOULD BECOME ONE OF HIS BEST-KNOWN WORKS, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF ITS WONDERFUL QUALITIES, BUT BECAUSE OF ITS HISTORY. IN THE 11TH CENTURY THE GREAT SONG DYNASTY POET, SU SHI (1037–1101), EMENDED THE TEXT OF A KEY LINE, WITH HIS SUGGESTION EVENTUALLY BECOMING STANDARD. SEVERAL RECENT SCHOLARS, REVIEWING THE TEXTUAL EVIDENCE, MAINTAIN THAT SU SHI WAS WRONG. IN THIS PAPER I WILL REVIEW THIS EVIDENCE AND THEN ARGUE THAT IN ADDITION, THE ORIGINAL WORD THAT WAS EMENDED (望 WANG/GAZE EMENDED TO 見 JIAN/SEE) IS ACTUALLY KEY TO MAKING THE POEM "WORK," THAT IT CLARIFIES THE "TRUTHS" TO BE FOUND IN THE POEM AND SHOULD BE "REINSTATED."



DANIEL HSIEH IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHINESE, EMERITUS, PURDUE UNIVERSITY. HE WORKS ON CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY AND EARLY FICTION. A FORTHCOMING BOOK IS "THE LATE WANDERINGS OF DU FU (712–770)."

Incoming Graduate Students, Fall Semester 2025:

We are very excited to welcome three new graduate students into our CMPL program. Bayan Konysbekkyzy from Kazakhstan with a TAship in Japanese, Alan Estefan Gutiérrez from the University of Utah with a College of Liberal Arts Dean's Fellowship, and Riley Grasham who has earned BAs in English and Creative Writing from Purdue. Welcome!!!

Bayan Konysbekkyzy:



"I completed my M.A. this Spring Semester in the Department of Japanese in the School of Languages and Cultures at Purdue with a thesis entitled "Depictions of Pregnancy, Children, Fertility, and Family Structure by Takahashi Takako, Ogawa Yōko, and Muratan Sayaka in Modern Japanese Literature." I also completed an M.A. in Culurology (World Cultures and Civilizations) from the Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages in Almaty, Kazakhstan, with a thesis on "Taboos in Japanese and Kazakh Cultures." My research

interests are Modern Japanese Literature, Women Writers, Second Language Acquisition, and Japanese Pedagogy. In addition to being a Graduate Teaching Assistant in Japanese at Purdue, I have also been a Japanese Instructor in the School of Oriental Studies, Foreign Philology (Eastern Languages Department) at the Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Alan Estefan Gutiérrez:



"I'm interested in finding intersections between Hispanic literature and literatures from other languages and cultures, traditions and historical periods. Particularly, I'm interested in narrative theory, stories about dictators, and the genre of the tragedy. I'm also interested in writing instruction. I like theorizing about writing about literature in Spanish, writing centers and peer tutoring, and Writing in the Disciplines."

Riley Grasham:



"My name is Riley Grasham. I am 23. I recently graduated in 2024 from Purdue University with a bachelor's degree in English with a concentration on Education and a bachelor's degree in creative writing. I grew up in Frankfort, Indiana, 45 minutes South from West Lafayette. One fun fact is that my high school mascot was a Hot Dog! Since I was young, I've been interested in pursuit literature. I've always

found it interesting how literature can reflect the culture of the writer as a whole. Literature can reflect on the writer's personal being as well as the culture they were raised in, and I intend to pursue further research and interest in this subject. I am particularly fond of foreign literature, and I am hoping that this master's program will provide me with access to information that 10-year-old me would never have thought possible.

I look forward to working with all of you and being a teaching assistant moving forward!"

As mentioned above, Gwénaél Jouin completed his PhD with a doctoral dissertation in May 2025 with major professor Angelica Duran



Gwénaél Jouin successfully defended his dissertation in Comparative Literature: "Truth in the Novel, in Major English, French, and Spanish Novels, c. 1550-1900," in the Spring of 2025. He is now working on a book proposal to publish his dissertation. Other publication projects include two articles, one on John Milton and the other on Edward Eggleston's *The Hoosier Schoolmaster* (1871). Gwénaél also gave a talk on "Victor Hugo's *Ninety-Three* (1874): Revolt, Political Conscience, and the Genre of Novel" at the 30th Annual North American Society for the Study of Romanticism Conference in Washington, D.C., in August 2024. In addition to these research activities, Gwénaél found

great reward in teaching "The Bible as Literature" in the Fall of 2024 and "World Literature: From the Eighteenth-Century to the Present" in the Spring of 2025, and was glad to work with outstanding students. His excellence in teaching has been recognized by a Purdue IMPACT award in December 2024. Gwénaél is currently on the job market looking for new teaching and research adventures.

He adds: "Gwénaël would like to use this newsletter to thank his wonderful Dissertation Committee Chair, Dr. Angelica Duran, for her excellent mentorship over the past five years. He also sincerely thanks his other Dissertation Committee Members, Dr. Beate Allert, Dr. Thomas Broden, and Dr. Paula Leverage, for their great insights during his Ph.D. program. Finally, Gwénaël would like to thank the School of Languages and Cultures and Purdue University, more broadly, for giving him a very comfortable Graduate Teaching Assistantship, formative teaching opportunities, and excellent resources for research. Gwénaël will deeply miss Purdue University and the people he met there, but he will proudly continue to adopt the Purdue spirit in his teaching and research. Once a Boilermaker, always a Boilermaker! Best regards, Gwénaël."

Thanks also to Gwénaël Jouin for having organized our CMPL luncheons during the last academic years. The last social event for the year was a dinner at the "Taste of India" restaurant on April 30, 2025 which included also some guests





Recent Accomplishments by CMPL affiliated faculty:

Paula Leverage continues to work and publish in the field of neuroscientific literary and film studies and to serve on the executive committee for the Society of Literature, Science and the Arts. Her article "Theory of Mind and Lies in Marcel Carné's *Les Visiteurs du soir*" was published in *The French Review*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (December, 2024), pp. 15-31,

<https://doi.org/10.1353/tfr.2024.a947598>. A second article "Creative Etymologies: A Cross Disciplinary Analysis of Creativity" will appear in June in *Leonardo* (The MIT Press) Vol. 58, Issue 3, (June 2025), pp. 235-40.

With her co-editors (Howard Mancing, Richard Schweickert, and Jennifer William) she is preparing a second edition of *Theory of Mind and Literature* which will be published in 2026.

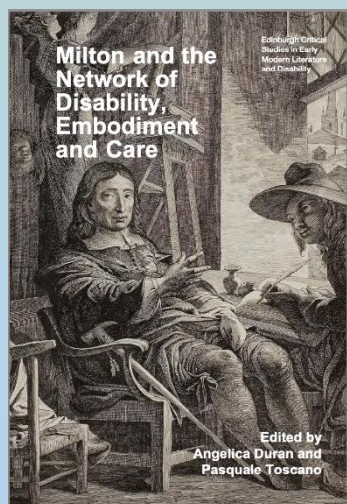
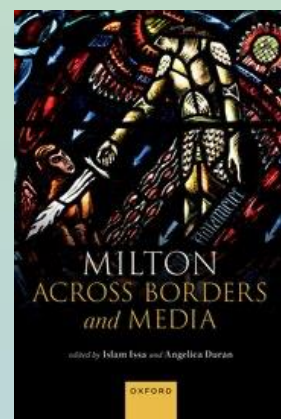
Her teaching reflects these research interests. In Fall 2025 she will teach the first formal iteration of "Introduction to Neurohumanities." She is also

the proud recipient of the School of Languages and Literature's teaching award. In addition to serving on the graduate committees of MA and PhD students in Francophone studies, she participated in the committees of Comp Lit students Sarah Jaran (prelims and prospectus defense), Marisa English (prelims and prospectus defense) and Gwénaél Jouin (PhD defense).

Angelica Duran continues to publish primarily in the arena of Comparative Literature, and in the 2024-25 schoolyear received the following recognitions for that work:

1) The Milton Society of America's 2023 Irene S. Samuel Memorial Award for her ninth book, *Milton Across Borders and Media*, co-edited with Islam Issa (Oxford UP, 2023).

2) The Conference on Christianity and Literature's 2023 Lionel Basney Award for her article "Milton's Early Modern English Protestant *Paradise Lost* in a Modern Mexican Christmastide Civic Drama." *Christianity & Literature Special Issue: Global Literature and Global Christianities* 72, no. 4 (2023): 542-63.



Her chapter "Presencing the Author: Illustrations of Milton in Hispanoamerican Publications" was published in *Milton's Moving Bodies*, edited by Rachel Trubowitz and Marissa Greenberg, 233-58 (Northwestern UP, 2024). Also, she received two Purdue University Book Initiative awards for her tenth and eleventh books, *Global Bunyan and Visual Art* (Bloomsbury Books, forthcoming 2025) and *Milton and the Network of Disability, Embodiment and Care* (Edinburgh UP, forthcoming 2026).

Finally, she is thrilled to have been the chairperson for Gwénaél Jouin's dissertation, *Truth in the Novel, in Major English, French, and Spanish Novels, c. 1550-1900*, successfully defending in March 2025, and to have had the privilege of working with committee members Beate Allert, Tom Broden, and Paula Leverage.



DE GRUYTER

VIKINGS, KNIGHTS, ELVES, AND OGRES

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF SHAUN F.D. HUGHES

*Edited by Eric R. Carlson, Dorsey Armstrong,
and Arielle C. McKee*

FESTSCHRIFTEN, OCCASIONAL PAPERS,
AND LECTURES

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MIP

University Press | Kalamazoo
Western Michigan University

Shaun Hughes gave the paper "Cryptic Alphabets in Some Early Modern Icelandic Manuscripts in the Houghton Library at Harvard University" in the Forum LLC Old Norse: Reading What's There: Readers, Writers, and Visibility in Old Norse Textual Culture at the 140th MLA Annual Convention, New Orleans, LA, January 9-12, 2025 and the paper "From Guðrún to Galadriel: Less Visible Links to the Elder Edda" in the session "Tolkien and Old Norse" at the 60th Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI. May 08-10, 2025. He also organized two sessions at the same conference on behalf of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, one

on Literary Studies, the second on Material Studies. He was also the recipient of a festschrift edited by former students and colleagues, *Vikings, Knights, Elves, and Ogres*, edited by Eric R. Carlson, Dorsey Armstrong, and Arielle C. McKee (Medieval Institute Press, 2025).

Recent Accomplishments by CMPL Graduate Students

Xiaoyang Guo, who has just completed his first year of Ph.D. studies in CMPL, published: 郭霄阳.“传统的另一种现代可能性——日本唯美派与中国学衡派的文化主张.” *东方学:术* .02 (2024):203-216. doi:CNKI:SUN:DFXS.0.2024-02-014 (“Another Modern Possibility of Tradition: The Cultural Propositions of the Japanese Aestheticism School and the Chinese Xueheng School.” *Dongfang Studies* .02 (2024):203-216. He will also present the paper “Mapping the Contours of Culture: ‘Aesthetic Foreign Concessions’ in Tanizaki Jun’ichirō’s Works” at the 2025 ICLA Congress. July 28th-August 1st August, 2025, Seoul, South Korea.

This Spring, Comp. Lit PhD candidate Diana Torres Aries co-chaired the panel “(Re)reading the Resistance of the Disabled Body within Hispanic and Latinx Communities” at NeMLA 56th Annual Convention in Philadelphia. At the same conference, she presented her research title: “A Different Blueprint for the Disabled Body in Mauricio Montenegro’s ‘Puñetazo al aire’.”



Diana Torres Aries presented “Unfolding AI: From the Written Representation to the Auditory- Dialogue Between Jorge Carrion’s *Membrana* and *Solaris*” at the Baroque Intelligence Symposium in the city of Boca Raton, and participated in the 2025 CLA Fellowship Showcase at Purdue in West Lafayette.



Andrew Kroninger came back from his research trip at Marbach Literaturarchiv and Vienna Archives last year and was Prof. Beate Allert's Teaching Assistant in her large German Cinema class in Spring 2025. He is working on his PhD dissertation, "Downfall and Xenophobia: Dostoyevsky and European Modernists" with the main adviser Prof. Jeffrey Turco (other committee members Olga Lyanda-Gellert and Beate Allert). This year he won an SLC Teaching Award.

Ching-Jen Sun (Professor Sagar, chair, with Professors Bassoe, Klein-Pejšová, and Allert) received a Bilsland Fellowship with funding for the new academic year to complete his PhD dissertation next year for which he wrote so far two substantial chapters out of four. The working title of his dissertation is "The Crafting of Democratic Taiwanese National Identity in the Mago Generation's Cultural Production post-1987."

Rida Altaf, who has just finished her first year in the M.A. program in CMPL, continues her studies in speculative fiction. She published the short story "Miracle Tech" in *Tasavvur: A South-Asian Speculative Fiction Magazine* 9 (Fall 2024), 3809 words. Her short story, "Griefbot" won the Booth Tarkington Fiction Award at the 2025 Literary Awards Contest sponsored by the Department of English at Purdue. She also delivered the paper "Indra's Narrative Jewels: Microcosmic Narrative Discourse as Hopeful Climate Resistance in Vandana Singh's 'Indra's Web' (2011) and 'Reunion' (2021)" at the 40th Annual International Conference on Narrative, Florida International University, Miami, FL, April 02-05, 2025.

rites of passage: New ABDs:

Marisa (Bryans) English completed her prelims and successfully defended her dissertation prospectus. She is advanced to candidacy for the PhD (ABD all but dissertation), working on a dissertation tentatively entitled, "Bodies of Proof: Gender, Attire, and Identity Construction in Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century French and English Literature" (Committee: Hughes, Armstrong, Leverage, Allert). She also chaired the panel "Scandinavian studies (1): Literary Studies" at the 60th Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI. May 08-10, 2025.

Sarah Jaran completed her prelims and also successfully defended her dissertation prospectus now being advanced to candidacy for the PhD (ABD all but dissertation), working on a dissertation tentatively entitled "Ways to Prepare your Flesh: Exploring Salvation Discourses through the Stomach's Tastes" (Committee: Johnston, Bartlett, Leverage, Turco). She will be teaching in Grenoble next year with the Purdue University Study Abroad Exchange program and we wish her a wonderfully productive year in France!

Featured undergraduate Student:

Riley Kirby



"I'm currently a sophomore who is double majoring in Film and Video Studies and Comparative Literature with a minor in Accounting. I'm from Converse, IN. I started out as only a Film and Video Studies major but decided to double major in Comparative Literature my Sophomore year. Since then, I've become even more enamored with comparative literature and world literature in general. Some of my favorite works that I've read this past semester have been Leo Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* (1886), Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915), and James Joyce's "The Dead" (1914). All these texts have furthered my interest in literature, and I particularly like short stories, especially after taking a short stories class in high school. I'm also an avid cinephile (if my major in

Film and Video Studies didn't make that clear) and I love watching and reading about films and film history. I really love David Lynch and John Waters films and will see pretty much anything with Tilda Swinton or Willem

Dafoe in it. I enjoy reading film criticism, especially reviews by critics like Roger Ebert, Pauline Kael, Owen Gleiberman, and Manohla Dargis. In a way, their reviews are their own form of literature, and I think the acceptance of new forms of literature like reviews, screenplays, even song lyrics in some instances helps broaden the field and expand peoples' minds. Speaking of music, I'm also a big-time music listener and record collector. Some of my all-time favorite artists are David Bowie, Fiona Apple, Prince, Björk, Radiohead and so many others from all different musical eras and genres. When I say I'll listen to nearly anything, I mean it. That's why I really appreciate Von's and their record collection and really just their overall vibe. If I had to pick my favorite building or business on campus it would probably be Von's which I feel like says a lot about my personality but so be it. Physical media preservation is something I really care about, so I think records and DVDs and Blu-Rays are extremely important in this day and age. The work The Criterion Collection does in the streaming age is vitally needed along with the work that the Internet Archive and The Wayback Machine does in preserving digital history. I also really love history, specifically 20th century world history. My favorite decade to look back on is the 1970s with its emerging modernism and revolutions in technology, music, filmmaking, fashion, and politics and culture. It's such a fascinating time, along with the 1990s, which I feel like gets glossed over in just how important a decade it was. This little introduction has probably already gone on too long so feel free to edit this however much you want, but I hope it provides an accurate portrait of my interests and personality."

Closing remarks:

Having participated in the National Survey of Programs in Comparative Literature Association of Department and Programs of Comparative Literature, I have received the report by Luis Fernando Restrepo (University of Arkansas) and Yopie Prins (University of Michigan) which provide program directors, faculty, students, and other stakeholders "a snapshot of the state of doctoral programs in the discipline today, including cohort sizes and degrees awarded over the past decade." I am glad to find that among the over 40 completed surveys, Purdue University looks fairly strong in that it has a relatively short time to degree average, yet a strong language competency requirement, a wide range of faculty affiliated the CMPL program, in addition to having done well for doctoral stipends, and curricular innovation. In general, the number of fully appointed faculty in Comparative Literature in the country appears to be slightly rising according to this report. Considering the annual average size of the entry cohorts at all responding institutions, the number of cohort students ranged from 6 (in 2014) students to 4.8 (2023) with a dip due to the Pandemic, so we are just a bit under the usual cohort size now at Purdue this year with 3 and would like to build that number up again. The report says: "Altogether nearly 2,000 students entered doctoral programs in comparative literature in the past decade (p.10 of the report) and nationally, in 2024, there were 1,151 students enrolled in Comparative Literature doctoral programs nationwide. Purdue University and our Comparative Literature program in SLC belongs to those who still require more than two languages other than English (Proficiency level Q22) and it may be another strength of our relatively small program to be able to draw from a wide spectrum of research specialties with faculty affiliated from across various schools or departments. We at Purdue focus on individual interests and needs by our graduate students. Our alumni have in fact been very successful in finding academic positions after the completion of their PhDs. Purdue University offers excellent opportunities of professionalizing, solid education in world literatures and cultures with a strong recruitment record, and an entire range of new certificates that invite students on all levels to engage more deeply with technology, use the university libraries and resources for their research and the community for outreach and learning. We have also pioneered admission practices

and offered online opportunities for interested potential applicants. It is wonderful that our Comparative Literature program belongs to the School of Languages and Cultures and draws from such a wide spectrum of departments. Working with Head of SLC, Professor Jen William and Associate Head of SLC Elena Coda, as well as graduate director of SLC Cara Kinnally is always a pleasure. We congratulate everyone for their successes as shown only in some examples in this CMPL Newlster. I wish those who have completed their degree or are departing all the best for the future! Welcome to our new cohort! Thanks to everyone for interest and support.

Wishing you a wonderful summer 2025. I am much looking forward to seeing you in August during orientation week and when the new semester and the new academic year begins.



School of Languages and Cultures