

# MODERN THOUGHT AND LITERATURE

Courses offered by the Program in Modern Thought and Literature are listed under the subject code MTL on the Stanford Bulletin's ExploreCourses web site.

The program in Modern Thought and Literature admits students for the Ph.D. and a limited number for a coterminal B.A./M.A. Program.

## Graduate Programs in Modern Thought and Literature

Modern Thought and Literature (MTL) is an interdisciplinary humanities graduate program advancing the study of critical issues in the modern world. Since 1971, MTL students have helped to redefine the cutting edge of many interdisciplinary fields and to reshape the ways in which disciplinary scholarship is understood and practiced. MTL graduates are leaders in fields such as American studies, ethnic studies, film studies, social and cultural studies, and women's studies, as well as English and comparative literature.

The program trains students to understand the histories and methods of disciplines and to test their assumptions. It considers how disciplines shape knowledge and, most importantly, how interdisciplinary methods reshape objects of study. MTL students produce innovative analyses of diverse texts, forms, and practices, including those of literature, history, philosophy, anthropology, law, and science; film, visual arts, popular culture, and performance; and material culture and technology.

Each student constructs a unique program of study suited to his or her research. Students have focused on such areas as gender and sexuality; race and ethnicity; science, technology, and medicine; media and performance; legal studies; and critical and social theory. The program's affiliated faculty is drawn from fields throughout the humanities and humanistic social sciences, as well as from education and law. As interdisciplinary study is impossible without an understanding of the disciplines under consideration, each student is expected to master the methods of literary analysis and to gain a foundation in a second field or discipline.

## Learning Outcomes (Graduate)

The purpose of the master's program is to further develop knowledge and skills in interdisciplinary literary studies and to prepare students for a professional career or doctoral studies. This is achieved through completion of courses, in the primary field as well as related areas, and experience with independent work and specialization.

The Ph.D. is conferred upon candidates who have demonstrated substantial scholarship and the ability to conduct independent research and analysis in interdisciplinary literary studies. Through completion of advanced course work and rigorous skills training, the doctoral program prepares students to make original contributions to the knowledge of interdisciplinary literary studies and to interpret and present the results of such research.

## Master of Arts

The Master of Arts is available to students who are admitted to the doctoral program and have not been awarded an M.A. previously. Students are not admitted into the program for the purpose of earning a terminal Master of Arts degree. Candidates for the Ph.D. who satisfy the committee of their progress and satisfactorily complete 45 units of course work forming a coherent program of study, may apply for an M.A. in Modern Thought and Literature.

## Coterminal Master's Program in Modern Thought and Literature

Each year, one or two undergraduates who are exceptionally well prepared in literature and whose undergraduate course work includes a strong interdisciplinary component, may petition to be admitted to the program for the purpose of completing a coterminal M.A. degree. Admission to this program is granted only on condition that in the course of working on their master's degrees they do not apply to enter the Ph.D. program in Modern Thought and Literature. The deadline for application is February 15 or the first business day following, if the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday.

To apply, applicants submit:

1. An unofficial grade transcript from Axess.
2. An Application for Admission to Coterminal Masters' Program (<http://registrar.stanford.edu/pdf/CotermApplic.pdf>).
3. A statement giving the reasons the student wishes to pursue this program and its place in his or her future plans. This statement should pay particular attention to the reasons why the student could not pursue the studies he or she desires in some other way.
4. An initial plan of study listing, quarter by quarter, each course by name, units, and instructor, to be taken in order to fulfill the requirements for the degree for a total of 45 units, including at least 20 units of advanced work in one literature, and at least 20 units of advanced work in a coherent interdisciplinary program of courses taken in non-literature departments. Students may include appropriate coursework taken during the two quarters prior to the quarter of expected matriculation in the program. Except in unusual cases, this will mean courses taken in the autumn and winter quarters of the year of application for admission. (Changes in the course list are to be expected.)
5. A writing sample of critical or analytical prose, 20 pages maximum.
6. Two letters of recommendation from members of the faculty who know the applicant well and who can speak directly to the question of his or her ability to do graduate-level work.
7. A designated adviser from among the Stanford faculty; normally one letter of recommendation will be from this faculty member.

## University Coterminal Requirements

Coterminal master's degree candidates are expected to complete all master's degree requirements as described in this bulletin. University requirements for the coterminal master's degree are described in the "Coterminal Master's Program (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/cotermdegrees>)" section. University requirements for the master's degree are described in the "Graduate Degrees (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees/#masterstext>)" section of this bulletin.

After accepting admission to this coterminal master's degree program, students may request transfer of courses from the undergraduate to the graduate career to satisfy requirements for the master's degree. Transfer of courses to the graduate career requires review and approval of both the undergraduate and graduate programs on a case by case basis.

In this master's program, courses taken two quarters prior to the first graduate quarter, or later, are eligible for consideration for transfer to the graduate career. No courses taken prior to the first quarter of the sophomore year may be used to meet master's degree requirements.

Course transfers are not possible after the bachelor's degree has been conferred.

The University requires that the graduate adviser be assigned in the student's first graduate quarter even though the undergraduate career may still be open. The University also requires that the Master's Degree

Program Proposal be completed by the student and approved by the department by the end of the student's first graduate quarter.

## Degree Requirements

The candidate for the M.A. must complete at least 45 units of graduate work, to be divided in the following manner:

1. The introductory seminar, MTL 334A Concepts of Modernity I: Philosophical Foundations, 5 units; in the event of a scheduling conflict students may substitute MTL 334B Concepts of Modernity II: Culture, Aesthetics, and Society in the Age of Globalization, with the director's prior permission.
2. At least 20 units of advanced course work in literature, to be approved by the director.
3. At least 20 units of advanced course work in a coherent and individually arranged interdisciplinary program, to be approved by the director.

## Doctor of Philosophy in Modern Thought and Literature

University requirements for the Ph.D. are discussed in the "Graduate Degrees (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees>)" section of this bulletin.

Applicants for the Ph.D. program can visit the program's website (<https://mtl.stanford.edu>) for additional information. Online graduate applications are available at the Office of Graduate Admissions (<http://gradadmissions.stanford.edu>) web site. The GRE (Graduate Record Examination) is not required for application to the program. All applicants must submit the following as part of their application: statement of purpose, three letters of recommendation, and a writing sample of a maximum of about 7000 words, or two shorter papers of a similar combined length. Graduate students in Modern Thought and Literature begin study in Autumn Quarter of each academic year; there are no mid-year admissions.

A candidate for the Ph.D. degree in Modern Thought and Literature must complete three years (nine quarters) of full-time work, or the equivalent, in graduate study beyond the B.A. degree. He or she is expected to complete at least 18 courses of graduate work in addition to the dissertation. Students may spend one year of graduate study abroad.

Requirements for the Ph.D. in Modern Thought and Literature are:

- |    |  | Units |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. |  |       |
|    | MTL 334A   | 5     |
|    | Concepts of Modernity I: Philosophical Foundations   |       |
|    | MTL 334B   | 5     |
|    | Concepts of Modernity II: Culture, Aesthetics, and Society in the Age of Globalization (Offered in 2016-17 as MTL 334) |       |
|    | MTL 334C   | 3     |
|    | Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies  |       |
2. A coherent program of eight courses of advanced work in literary studies to be worked out with the adviser, of which at least six must be regularly scheduled courses in literature. Courses in the teaching of composition, independent study, or thesis registration may not be counted among these six courses; ENGLISH 396L Pedagogy Seminar I, MTL 399 Reading for Orals, MTL 802 TGR Dissertation may not be counted toward these requirements under any circumstances. Petitions to modify this requirement to substitute a course from a non-literature department for one or more of the required eight literature courses must be approved by the MTL Committee in Charge.
  3. Eight courses of advanced work in non-literature departments, the core of which is completion of either a departmental minor

or an interdepartmental concentration, typically consisting of six courses. Departmental minors are available from a number of departments in the humanities and social sciences, including the departments of Anthropology, Art and Art History, Communication, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Theater and Performance Studies (see the relevant information in those sections of this bulletin). Alternatively, students may opt to join interdisciplinary Ph.D. minors in either Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity or in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Individually designed concentrations may be approved by petition to the director. In addition to the required six courses in a minor or a concentration, two additional courses from non-literature departments are chosen in consultation with the student's academic adviser. At the end of the first year, each student must submit to the director a preliminary statement of approximately 1500 words outlining the scope and coherence of the interdisciplinary focus, either as it relates to the departmental minor or to the interdepartmental concentration. In either case, the student should note the relevance of any proposed coursework to the overall program (see #7 below). Course restrictions noted above in # 2 also apply.

4. *Qualifying Paper*: This certifies that students are likely to be able to undertake the quality of research, sustained argumentation, and cogent writing demanded in a doctoral dissertation. The qualifying paper must be a substantial revision of a seminar paper written at Stanford during the first year and should embody a substantial amount of independent research, develop an intellectual argument with significant elements of original thinking, and demonstrate the ability to do interdisciplinary work. Each paper is evaluated by two or three readers (designated before the end of the first year of graduate study), one of whom must be a member of the Committee in Charge or have been a member within the previous five years. Qualifying papers must be submitted to the program office no later than the end of the third week of the fifth quarter of enrollment, normally, Winter Quarter of the second year.
5. *Teaching* is an essential part of the program. One quarter is normally undertaken in conjunction with the Department of English. The second quarter may be undertaken in conjunction with any department or program within the university. Although students have some flexibility in arranging for teaching appointments, program approval is required in order to assure that each experience provides appropriate and useful training.
6. Students must demonstrate, before the beginning of the second year of study, a reading knowledge of one foreign language and, by Spring Quarter of the third year, a reading knowledge of one other foreign language. Reading knowledge means the ability to make a genuine scholarly use of the language: that is, to read prose of ordinary difficulty. Students may not take the University oral examination before completion of the foreign language requirement.
7. *Candidacy*: At the end of the second year, students apply for candidacy. The decision to advance a student to candidacy is a judgment of the faculty. The student is only admitted to candidacy if, in addition to the student's fulfilling departmental prerequisites, the faculty makes the judgment that the student has the potential to successfully complete the requirements of the degree program. The following qualifications are required before candidacy can be certified:
  - the earlier submission of a satisfactory qualifying paper;
  - demonstration of a reading knowledge of one foreign language;
  - satisfactory progress in course work;
  - a list of courses applicable to the degree, distinguishing between courses appropriate to the literary component and courses appropriate to the non-literary component;
  - designation of a departmental minor or an interdisciplinary concentration; and,

- the submission of a statement outlining the scope and coherence of the interdisciplinary component of the program in relation to the literary component, and noting the relevance of the course work to that program.
8. *Annual Review:* The program and progress of each student must be approved by the Committee in Charge at the end of each academic year. First-year students will submit the preliminary interdisciplinary statement along with the first year-end report (see #3 above).
  9. *University Oral Examination:* This examination, covering the student's areas of concentration, is normally taken in the third year of graduate study. It is a two-hour oral examination administered by four faculty members specializing in the student's areas of concentration, and a chair from another department. The exam is based on a substantial reading list prepared by the student in conjunction with the faculty committee and designed to cover the areas of expertise pertinent to the student's dissertation project.
  10. *Dissertation Proposal and Colloquium:* Within one quarter after the University oral examination, the student writes up the dissertation proposal. The recommended length for the dissertation proposal is 5 pages double-spaced (with a maximum length of 8 pages). It should contain (additionally) a full bibliography. The proposal is submitted to the program director and the dissertation committee for approval. After completion of one chapter of the dissertation, the student sets up a meeting with the dissertation committee for one hour to discuss the work accomplished in the first chapter and plans for completing the rest of the dissertation.
  11. *Dissertation:* The fourth and fifth years are devoted to the dissertation, which should be a substantial and original contribution acceptable to the Committee in Charge of Modern Thought and Literature. The subject is drawn from the literature of specialization and the area of nonliterary studies. The dissertation project will conclude with a two-hour defense. The first hour is open to the public and includes a brief presentation of the dissertation project on the part of the Ph.D. candidate. The second hour is reserved to the candidate and his/her Dissertation Committee.

## Ph.D. Minor in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

The Program in Modern Thought and Literature sponsors a Ph.D. minor in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. The Ph.D. minor is administered by the Program in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. (<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/schoolofhumanitiesandsciences/feministstudies/#phdminortext>)

## Ph.D. Minor in Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity

The Program in Modern Thought and Literature sponsors a Ph.D. minor in Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity. The Ph.D. minor is administered by the Program in Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity.

## Graduate Advising Expectations

The Program in Modern Thought and Literature is committed to providing academic advising in support of graduate student scholarly and professional development. When most effective, this advising relationship entails collaborative and sustained engagement by both the adviser and the advisee.

Faculty advisers guide students in key areas such as selecting courses, designing and conducting research, developing of teaching pedagogy, navigating policies and degree requirements, and exploring academic opportunities and professional pathways.

Upon arrival, incoming MTL Ph.D. students are assigned first-year faculty advisers who help students select classes with the student's academic interests as well as the program requirements in mind. Advising arrangements are made for coterminal M.A. students at the time of their admission to the program.

Prior to advancement to TGR status, all Ph.D. students should also meet with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) each quarter to discuss overall progress. After reaching TGR status, students should check in with the DGS at least once a year.

As a best practice, advising expectations should be periodically discussed and reviewed to ensure mutual understanding. For both Ph.D. and M.A. students, at least two consultations per quarter with the DGS and the primary adviser are highly recommended to foster an effective advising relationship. Both the adviser and the advisee are expected to maintain professionalism and integrity.

Graduate students are active contributors to the advising relationship, proactively seeking academic and professional guidance and taking responsibility for informing themselves of policies and degree requirements for their graduate program.

After the first year of study, when Ph.D. students have a better sense of their academic trajectories, they may choose to change advisers with the approval of the director and the DGS.

For a statement of University policy on graduate advising, see the "Graduate Advising (<https://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees/#advisingandcredentialstext>)" section of this bulletin.

*Director:* Héctor Hoyos

*Director of Graduate Studies:* Tom Mullaney

*Committee in Charge:* Michaela Bronstein, Shelley Fisher Fishkin (on leave autumn, winter), Héctor Hoyos (Chair), Roanne Kantor, Elizabeth Kessler, Charles Kronengold, Marci Kwon, Bernadette Meyler, Ana Minian, Tom Mullaney, Karla Oeler, Vaughn Rasberry, José David Saldivar, Matthew Smith

*Affiliated Faculty:* Lanier Anderson (*Philosophy*), Russell Berman (*German Studies*), Jennifer Brody (*Theater & Performance Studies*), Michaela Bronstein (*English*), Scott Bukatman (*Art & Art History*), Gordon Chang (*History*), Adrian Daub (*German Studies*), Jean-Pierre Dupuy (*French & Italian*), Paulla Ebron (*Anthropology*), Harry Elam (*Theater & Performance Studies*), Michele Elam (*English*), Amir Eshel (*German Studies, Comparative Literature*), Shelley Fisher Fishkin (*English*), Zephyr Frank (*History*), Estelle Freedman (*History*), Duana Fullwiley (*Anthropology*), Thomas Hansen (*Anthropology*), David Hills (*Philosophy*), Héctor Hoyos (*Iberian & Latin American Cultures*), Lochlain Jain (*Anthropology*), Tomas Jimenez (*Sociology*), Roanne Kantor (*English*), Elizabeth Kessler (*American Studies*), Matthew Kohrman (*Anthropology*), Charles Kronengold (*Music*), Marci Kwon (*Art & Art History*), Joshua Landy (*French & Italian, Comparative Literature*), Pavle Levi (*Art & Art History*), Helen Longino (*Philosophy*), Douglas McAdam (*Sociology*), Mark McGurl (*English*), Alison McQueen (*Political Science*), Jisha Menon (*Theater & Performance Studies*), Lynn Meskell (*Anthropology*), Ana Minian (*History*), Paula Moya (*English*), Tom Mullaney (*History*), Alex Nemerov (*Art & Art History*), David Palumbo-Liu (*Comparative Literature*), Peggy Phelan (*Theater & Performance Studies*), Robert Proctor (*History*), Vaughn Rasberry (*English*), Robert Reich (*Political Science*), Jessica Riskin (*History*), José David Saldivar (*Comparative Literature*), Ramón Saldivar (*English, Comparative Literature*), Londa Schiebinger (*History*), Matthew Smith (*German Studies, Theater and Performance Studies*), Sharika Thiranagama (*Anthropology*), Fred Turner (*Communication*), Ban Wang (*East Asian Languages and Cultures*), Gail Wight (*Art & Art History*), Alex Woloch (*English*)