LITERATURE/HUMANITIES

The literature/humanities requirement is fulfilled by the completion of at least one literature course at Columbia and either an additional literature course or a course in the humanities. In addition to the rich variety of courses offered by the Department of English and Comparative Literature, students may choose from among the many literature courses found in Columbia’s foreign language and literature departments.

Masterpieces of Western Literature and Philosophy

GS students may elect to take the two-semester sequence in Masterpieces of Western Literature and Philosophy, HUMA GS1001-HUMA GS1002 (commonly known as "Lit Hum"), to fulfill the literature/humanities requirement. This year-long course is particularly recommended for students who are planning to major in English literature or philosophy. Refer to/Print the 2019-2020 Masterpieces of Western Literature and Philosophy syllabus.

The acclaimed Literature Humanities core sequence exposes students to some of the most influential literary works in the Western tradition. In works of drama, history, and epic, among other genres, students see how writers across the centuries have explored the great themes of human life. The course’s chronological approach introduces students to literary works in the order that they were written, allowing them to trace the development of philosophical ideas alongside the development of literary forms, and to discover how the works of one era will often anticipate the concerns and achievements of a later age.

Literature Requirement

To fulfill the literature requirement, a course must focus on the study of poetry, fiction, drama, or related genres. Typically, such courses include the majority of offerings in the Columbia Department of English and Comparative Literature. Courses on literature in translation, as well as literature courses in foreign languages at the 3000 level or above, can satisfy the literature requirement. Courses that focus primarily on literary theory, film, music, creative writing, or other non-literary interdisciplinary topics may not count for the literature requirement, especially if offered in other departments. Please consult your advisor to confirm that the course in question fulfills the literature requirement.

Humanities Requirement

Humanities courses offer ways to understand the development of cultures and how the human experience is expressed. A course from one of the following departments or interdisciplinary programs may count towards the humanities requirement. In foreign language departments, only courses at the 3000 level or above, excluding courses focused on language instruction, may apply.

- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Art History and Archaeology
- Classics
- English and Comparative Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- Germanic Languages
- History*
- Italian
- Latin American and Iberian Cultures
- Music
- Philosophy
- Religion
- Slavic Languages

*Courses from the Department of History may be counted toward the social science or the humanities requirement, but in no case may more than two courses from one department be used to fulfill Core requirements

Interdisciplinary Programs

The following interdisciplinary programs offer courses in both humanities and social sciences. GS advisors must determine the appropriate category for a course when taken to satisfy a core requirement.

- African-American Studies
- American Studies
- Ethnicity and Race Studies
- Comparative Literature and Society
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- Hispanic Studies
- Human Rights
- Jewish Studies
- Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- Medicine, Literature, and Society
- Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies
- Women’s and Gender Studies

Note: Only the first semester of Contemporary Civilization may be applied to either the humanities requirement or the social science requirement (but not both). The second semester may only be applied to the social science requirement.