‘Literature in Society’

• How do literature and film relate to contemporary political and social issues?
  • Politics
  • Identity
  • Migration
  • Memory
  • Environment
  • Mobility […]

  Literature & film reflect on social and political issues but also shape them.
‘Europe and Beyond’

• Identity, migration, memory are transnational, global issues
  → study literature in a comparative perspective:
• Confrontations between European literatures
• Confrontations between European and non-European literatures
Travelling languages and literatures

• Literature as a vehicle of travelling (European) languages, themes, genres, literary forms…

• The role of colonization and decolonization in the travelling of literatures:
  - travelling European literatures.
    Example: North African francophone literatures
  - migrant literatures around the world
Our specific approach of literature and film

• Object-centered: importance of the socio-historical context and of close reading primary literature

• The place of literary theory

• Focus on British, French, German, Italian, Dutch, North American and South American literatures (read in English)

• ‘Literature in Society’ as a joint initiative of the following MA’s: English, French, German and Italian Literature and Culture, North American Studies, Latin America Studies, Modern Dutch literature and culture.
Structure of the programme

4 electives (40 EC) + masterthesis (20 EC) = 60 EC

1) start in September:
   - first term: 3 electives (30 EC)
   - second term: 1 elective (10 EC) + masterthesis (20 EC)

2) start in February:
   - second term: 3 electives (30 EC)
   - first term: 1 elective (10 EC) + masterthesis (20 EC)
Our programme in 2018-19

• Course 1 (10 EC, required): Literature in Society. Narrative, Fiction and Voice (1st term)

• Course 2 (10 EC, required): first term: choose Tales of Terror and Wonder or European Modernism; second term: choose (Re)mapping the City in Modern Literature and Visual Cultures or Memory and Trauma in times of transition;

• Course 3: elective (10 EC): choose a course mentioned under Course 2 or one of the following:
  a) American Comics : Autobiography and Journalism in graphic novels (1st term)
  b) Slavery in European and Caribbean Literature (2nd term)
  c) Migration Matters : Immigration, Memory and Identity in American Literature (2nd term)

• Course 4 : elective (10 EC): choose a course listed above or a course on literature and culture from a related MA* or an internship*.

• Master thesis « Literature in Society » (20 EC)

*only with prior approval of the Board of Exams.
Literature in Society. Narrative, Fiction and Voice (core course)

- How do fictional narratives in literature and film reflect upon social and political issues? How do they shape our views on politics, trauma, environment and global identity?

- A few titles of classes:
  - Politics: Thinking through Post-Apartheid with Coetzee, *Disgrace*.
  - Trauma and Memory: the trauma of slavery in Tony Morrison’s *Beloved*
  - Mobility: the transnational road movie and the politics of life in transit
  - Happiness: Tom Lanoye, *Fortunate slaves*.

A teamtaught course with staff from Literary Studies, Modern Dutch Literature and Culture, North American Studies and Latin America Studies.
Elective: (Re)mapping the City in Modern Literature and Visual Cultures

• The City as a physical, spatial phenomenon but also as a mental artifact → study the representations of cities in literature and film

• Themes: the city night stroller, the ‘flâneur’ and the ‘flâneuse’, the invention of daily life, the contemporary megalopolis, the Postcolonial city…

• A transnational approach: confronting French and South-American (Brasilian) literature and film.
Knowledge & skills

Knowledge:
• In depth knowledge of the field of European and non-European literature and culture
• Ability to reflect on the relevance of literature for social and political issues
• Ability to study literature with a comparative, transnational approach

Skills:
• Comparative and analytical skills
• Critical and independent thinking
• Excellent oral and written skills
• Good verbal and written academic English
• Solving complex challenges - together with other students
Your future field of work?

A few examples:

- Desk editor
- Journalist
- Freelance copy editor
- Teacher in adult education
- Job in the cultural area (museums, theaters…)
- PhD candidate at Leiden University
- Marketing Communications Writer
- Translator for government or business or literary translator

What graduates do in their first jobs:

- Teaching: 14%
- Writing/editing: 11%
- Administration/accountancy: 8%
- Communication: 7%
- Research and development: 7%
- Sales: 6%
- Consultancy: 4%
- Marketing/advertising/PR: 4%
- Management: 3%
- Production/logistics: 3%
- Interpreting/translating: 3%
- Documentary information management: 3%
- Policy development: 2%
- Other (such as IT, purchasing and acquisition): 25%
Your future prospects?

• 71% of alumni find a first job within 2 months.

• 74% find a professional university or academic level job.

• More or less 48% find their first job through their personal network (family, friends, lecturers, internship, job)

• 27% find first job via vacancy, 6% are asked to continue to work at the organization of their internship.

www.yourprospectsforwork.nl
What kind of preparation works?

• **A master’s degree pays off**: In their first job, master’s students often occupy higher-level positions than bachelor’s students.

• Graduates with **internship experience** are more likely to have obtained the job they wanted: 56% compared to graduates who did not have this experience: 48%.

• **Relevant (part-time) work experience** also has a positive effect on obtaining the job you aspire to have: 56% of graduates with work experience compared to 46% of graduates without work experience obtained their desired job.

• Contact our **Student Career Service** for advice on internships and work: hum.leiden.edu/careerservice

If you want to find out more, visit the **Job Market Café** at the information market, solve the puzzle and **you might win a laptop!**
Entry requirements

A BA in Humanities:

1) BA’s in Languages and Cultures (see list on the site): (almost) automatic admittance

2) “generalist” Humanities’ BA’s: for instance “International Studies” (UL), “Taal- en cultuurstudies” (UU), Cultuurwetenschappen (UvA), Europese Studies (UvA), Literatuur en samenleving (VU), BA’s from University Colleges:

   admittance provided you have done at least 30 EC literature courses.

3) other BA’s in the Humanities: admittance provided you have done at least 30 EC literature courses.

   For 2 and 3, a bridging programme of 5-30 EC may be required in case of deficiencies.
Experiences of Francine Maessen, a Literature in Society student

• Why ‘Literature in Society’?

• Present activities

• Why enthousiastic and what’s less easy?

• Best tip for choosing a Master
Student life in Leiden

- Historical city with several theatres, cinemas and museums

- Good public transport connections to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague

- Over 30 different student associations, several of which welcome International and MA students

- University facilities for sports, art and music
More information?

• Meet us in the P.J Veth building from now to 16.30 hrs!

• On the contents of ‘Literature in Society: dr. A. Schulte Nordholt: A.E.Schulte@hum.leidenuniv.nl

• On practical matters: the study advisor of Literary Studies, mr. J. Donkers: j.donkers@hum.leidenuniv.nl

• Job Market Café in the Arsenaal building: meet alumni and career advisor.

• www.mastersinleiden.nl/