

**COMPARATIVE HUMANITIES MAJOR
CLASS OF 2025**



ACADEMIC DOSSIER

**OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION &
ACCREDITATION**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: 3

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES: 3

MAPPING OF PLOS TO UNIVERSITY LEARNING GOALS:..... 4

CONCENTRATIONS: 5

REQUIRED COURSES:..... 7

REQUIRED CONCENTRATION COURSES:..... 10

LIST OF ELECTIVES:..... 15

GRADUATING REQUIREMENTS:..... 17

4-YEAR GRID: 18

E-PORTFOLIO: 20

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COMPARATIVE HUMANITIES

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Comparative Humanities (CH) offers students an exciting opportunity to study several disciplines in the humanities both critically and comparatively. Our areas of concentration include Philosophy, History, Literature, and Religious Studies. In teaching students to move fluidly across disciplines, we aim to cultivate not only breadth and depth, but an intellectual mindset attuned to the shared problems we face today as global citizens. CH will challenge students to reflect on a range of theories about human nature and society – drawing from diverse cultures, histories, and traditions – and in doing so heighten their sensitivity to the way our rapidly globalizing age of transnational capital has reshaped our understanding of concepts such as self, identity, obligation, community, and nation.

Students who pursue a CH major will learn to think both locally and globally, will learn to examine problems through a number of intellectual frameworks and traditions, and practice honing the skills of humanistic inquiry that continue to make the comparative humanities essential to the dynamic and multidimensional job markets of tomorrow. Learning to think comparatively within the humanities means learning to think flexibly and differently about the many problems we encounter in various professional domains.

It also means knowing how to use a critical framework to think through a difficult problem and, more crucially, knowing how to articulate and assess that problem in language that is at once cogent and graceful. A CH degree, therefore, clearly has both direct and indirect relevance to future pursuits in academia, media, journalism, management, government, law, and medicine, among the many other civic and international sectors in leadership where an insightful, perceptive, agile mind is an obvious mark of distinction.

Comparative Humanities (CH) aspires to train future intellectuals who know how to think flexibly across a number of disciplines, and thus how to work critically and creatively within an array of professional domains.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who graduate with a degree in Comparative Humanities will be able to:

1. Work comparatively and critically across several disciplines and traditions
2. Discuss the genealogy and development of major figures, periods, and ideas in the disciplines of Philosophy, Literature, Religion, History and Music.
3. Synthesize multiple points of view in working with a series of thematically related texts, traditions, or disciplinary perspectives
4. Apply a range of ethical, critical, and theoretical frameworks to contemporary intellectual concerns
5. Produce a theoretically informed close reading of a central work in dialogue with several other works and traditions
6. Navigate databases and assess primary and secondary materials.

MAPPING OF PLOS TO UNIVERSITY LEARNING GOALS:

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES - MAPPING										
		University Learning Goals (ULG)								
Domain		Know			Act			Value		
Theme		Knowledge	Interdisciplinary & Transdisciplinary	Context	Creativity & Innovation	Critical Inquiry	Communication & Collaboration	Social Impact	Thought Self-Cultivation	Ethical & Cultural Competence
Important attribute		Breadth & Depth	Synthesis & Connections	Contextually Grounded	Imaginative & Interesting	Analysis & Critical Thought	Interaction & Teamwork	Service & Sustainability	Yohsin Values & Lifelong Learning	Personal & Professional Ethics
Goal		ULG 01	ULG 02	ULG 03	ULG 04	ULG 05	ULG 06	ULG 07	ULG 08	ULG 09
Program Learning Outcomes		Demonstrate both a genuine breadth of knowledge through the Habib Liberal Core and a capable depth of knowledge through command of their chosen major.	Synthesize knowledge, methods and viewpoints from different disciplines to both make meaningful connections among and transcend them.	Demonstrate their knowledge is grounded in a firm understanding of the historical, social, political, economic, religious, regional and global contexts in which they are located.	Imagine, develop and produce creative, original ideas, interpretations and works.	Analyse and formulate relevant critical questions, and answer those questions in a substantive way supported by quantitative and qualitative evidence.	Listen actively to comprehend the meaning of others and successfully express cogent meaning through capable oral, written, and artistic modes of communication. Effectively interact and collaborate with others.	Recognize the reciprocity of knowledge and service, and benefit their community, society and the environment through socially responsible and sustainable engagement.	Cultivate lifelong curiosity by engaging in inquiry and reflection to acquire and apply new knowledge.	Develop and nurture their own beliefs, values and sense of responsibility to reach informed conclusions, while considering, appreciating and respecting the perspectives of others.
PLO 01	Work comparatively and critically across several disciplines and traditions	S	S	W						
PLO 02	Discuss the genealogy and development of major figures, periods, and ideas in the disciplines of Philosophy, Literature, Religion, and History.	S								
PLO 03	Synthesize multiple points of view in working with a series of thematically related texts, traditions, or disciplinary perspectives				S	S				
PLO 04	Apply a range of ethical, critical, and theoretical frameworks to contemporary intellectual concerns					S		W		S
PLO 05	Produce a theoretically informed close reading of a central work in dialogue with several other works and traditions.	S	S	S	S		S			
PLO 06	Navigate databases and assess primary and secondary materials								S	
							Legend Competencies			
							S: Strongly - Program learning outcome strongly maps to the university learning goal.			
							W: Weakly - Program learning outcome weakly maps to the university learning goal.			



CONCENTRATIONS:

History Concentration

History is one of the concentration options for students in Habib University's Comparative Humanities program. Students who decide to do their concentration in history will have the unique opportunity to read, write, and discuss a broad spectrum of primary and secondary source historical information. Ranging from South America to South Asia, from the African continent to the former Soviet Union (Eastern Europe and Central Asia), our history concentration transcends the Western world and provides students with a global approach to history that challenges Eurocentric narratives.

In addition to empowering students with a globally oriented perspective of history, the history concentration also gives them a global perspective of the Humanities as a whole. In line with the program's aim of approaching the Humanities under comparative lenses, the history concentration enables our students to create comparative conversations with religion, literature, and philosophy. Although these are not singular entities, since none of them can be considered in isolation, the study of history paves way for experiencing religious, literary, and philosophical sensibilities in the context of various historical milieus.

Approach to the History concentration in Comparative Humanities:

The history concentration has two requirements, one 100-level or 200-level course in global history in which students explore historical perspectives beyond national boundaries and the 300-level course Understanding Histories which provides a background in historiographical methods, theory and approaches. For primary concentration students there are 4 electives, and for those completing a secondary concentration there are 2 electives. Similarly, for a primary concentration, two higher (i.e., 300 to 400) level electives are necessary and for a secondary concentration one higher (i.e., 300-400) level course is required. History elective courses are designed to engage students with a wide-range of historical content and perspectives, and in addition to gaining a measure of knowledge about the topic, students are introduced to concepts, theories, figures and the interdisciplinarity of different approaches to historical topics.

Literature Concentration

What is the study of literature?

As a discipline and practice, the study of literature has been around since before the beginnings of recorded history. The study of literature is concerned with a more complex understanding of the world around us—the lived realities throughout different time periods, nations, and ways of being in the world—and with understanding the complexity of concepts that we often take as given. The analysis of literature develops the capacity for invention and innovation and has positive implications for thinking clearly and systematically about various kinds of theoretical and practical matters. Ideas generated through the study of literature also have the potential to bring about real substantive change in institutions, practices, socioeconomic systems, and, in general, life, conceived in all of its complexity.

Interpretive analysis is at the very center of the study of literature. From the standpoint of interpretive analysis, literature plays an important role in helping us think through the questions of meaning, sense, and reference, and in comparing frameworks for analysis—textual, non-textual, imagistic “texts”. The study of literature is also understood as a discipline that is in continuous conversation with its own past, in relation to ongoing tensions and debates that are old and yet urgent, and even more so in the context of the crisis of knowledge in the contemporary human, cultural, and ecological situation.

Approach to the Literature concentration in Comparative Humanities:

The course “What is World Literature?” is a concentration requirement, the second requirement for the literature concentration is “Introduction to Literary Theory”. Students completing a primary concentration in literature take 4 electives, and those completing a secondary concentration complete 4 electives. For both primary and secondary concentrations, two courses, either at the 300 or 400 level. are necessary. The



literature electives are structured around a variety of themes. The overall approach to the concentration combines synecdochal focus, intellectual history, and analytical exploration themes, which include cross-disciplinary readings of literature.

Philosophy Concentration

What is Philosophy?

As a discipline and practice, philosophy has been around for thousands of years, and different definitions have been provided for it. However, across differences - traditional, modern, analytic, continental, for example - one influential definition is that philosophy is concerned with the generation of concepts and conceptual categories, and with understanding the nature of concepts. The concepts created by major figures in philosophy - and in fact the capacity for conceptual invention and innovation - has positive implications for thinking clearly and systematically about various kinds of theoretical and practical matters, for concepts do guide thought. Concepts and conceptual categories generated in philosophy also have the potential to bring about ameliorative change in institutions, practices, socioeconomic systems, and, in general, life, conceived in its cerebral and creative dimensions.

Another shared definition of philosophy places interpretive and hermeneutical analysis and classification at the very centre of philosophical activity. From the standpoint of interpretive analysis, philosophy plays an important role in helping us think through the questions of meaning, sense, and reference, and in comparing frameworks for hermeneutical analysis. Since philosophy has so much to say about interpretive analysis, its study has positive implications for anyone thinking about overcoming irreconcilable differences through dialogues that promote understanding, and the challenge of approaches to finding meaning when processing the sheer abundance of data - textual, non-textual, imagistic - that we are saturated with in the age of information and tech mediated experience.

Philosophy is also understood as a discipline that is in continuous conversation with its own past, in relation to ongoing tensions and debates that are old and yet urgent, and even more so in the context of the crisis of knowledge in the contemporary human, cultural, and ecological situation. For example, we inherit, from Plato and Aristotle, a debate on what constitutes thinking as such. This debate continues throughout the modern and enlightenment era philosophy, where the linkage between critical thought and philosophy becomes indispensable. This survey of the past of philosophy, when seen from the standpoint of contemporary obfuscations and confusions, motivates us to reinvigorate the old debates on the question of thinking and the significance of nuance, division, and discrimination.

Approach to the Philosophy concentration in Comparative Humanities:

The course “What is Philosophy?” is a concentration requirement. Students completing a primary concentration in philosophy take 5 electives, and those completing a secondary concentration take 3 electives. For both primary and secondary concentrations, two higher (i.e., 300 to 400) level electives are necessary. The philosophy electives are structured around influential concepts, figures, arguments, and cross-disciplinary critique and engagement. The overall approach to the concentration combines synecdochal focus, intellectual history, and dialectical exploration of traditional arguments and themes, which includes cross-disciplinary readings of philosophy.

Religious Studies Concentration

In a predominantly theological context of religion, Religious Studies at Habib offers opportunities for an academic study of religion with a comparative approach applying the frameworks of humanities and social sciences. The concentration helps to critically analyse religion not as a reified or static entity but as a living experience with more than just a singular essence. Religious Studies employs historical, philosophical, literary and anthropological dimensions to explore religious ideas, beliefs and practices. It is not only a focus on major conceptual approaches and debates in the study of religion but also explores religious life in specific socio-cultural and political contexts.



REQUIRED COURSES:

In CH program, there are a total of 7 program CORE courses that are listed below:

HUM 101: Critical Inquiry and the Humanities

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

This is the First-Year team-taught introduction to both the four humanities disciplines taught at Habib University (History, Literature, Philosophy and Religious Studies) and an introduction to interdisciplinary conversation and approaches in the humanities. Students will learn the methods, aims and styles of inquiry practiced by our faculty. To provide an example that will hopefully clarify this approach, in the fall of 2020 we piloted this course using “love and desire” as the central organizing theme.

This course was team-taught and consisted of four units, one for each of the four major concentration areas (PHIL, LIT, RELS, HIST) in the program. Using the central organizing theme of love and desire, students explored how each of these four disciplines frames and examines some aspect of this broad complex issue that transcends a single academic discipline. In this case students considered what sorts of questions historians, scholars of literature, philosophers and religious studies scholars ask about a broad but complex topic like love and desire, and how they analyze the topic and pursue answers to the questions they ask. By bringing these four disciplinary fields in the humanities into conversation, students learned both about how each discipline works and also about how intellectual discourse across disciplinary boundaries proceeds. This facility for interdisciplinary inquiry is an important outcome for this major, and it yields the distinctive abilities in critical thinking for which the graduates of humanities programs have long been distinguished and valued. Through this introductory core course in Comparative Humanities, we also hope that our students will develop deeper appreciation for differing perspectives.

HUM 201: Conceptual Genealogies

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

This second course in the CH core sequence involves engagement with the historical and cultural formations of modernity across world traditions. Students will learn to think comparatively about cultures and traditions using the methods, aims and styles of inquiry practiced by our CH faculty. In Spring 2022, this course has been subtitled: **“Master Slave Dialectics”**

The course begins with a five-week literature module, followed by a five-week philosophy module, and finally a five-week history module. Starting with fiction and storytelling, students become affectively involved with the genealogy and interpretative hermeneutics of the master-slave dialectic. This structure creates an affect-concept-event rhythm, which the students can then carry into their comprehensive final project for the course. Following on HUM 101, which this year was themed on love and desire, HUM 201 shifts attention to power and desire, and specifically the master and slave theme. The first unit in the course will treat more or less metaphorical examples of the master-slave dialectic. In Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* we will be examining the power structure inherent in Father/Son and Father/Daughter relations, as well as the relation between the colonizer and the colonized. In Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, we will consider racial relations in 1950s America, the power dynamic between Americans of European descent and Americans of African descent, and the power of education to engender equality. Throughout this module students will be asked to make connections between the texts and concepts treated and their own lived experience, as well as those around them.

The second module of this course creates focus on the master and slave dialectic as engaged in several influential philosophical texts including: (1) Nietzsche’s *On the Genealogy of Morality*, “First Essay: Good and Evil, Good and Bad;” (2) Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: The Dialectic of Lord and Bondsman;” (3) Marx’s “Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole” from his *Economic & Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*; Marx’s “Fragment on



Machines” from his *Grundrisse*; (4) Judith Butler’s *Desire, Rhetoric, and Recognition* in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*; (5) Gadamer’s *Hegel’s Dialectic of Self-Consciousness*; and (6) Habermas’, *Labor and Interaction*. There are three main objectives of the philosophy module. First, to introduce conceptual genealogy as a mode of investigation in philosophy by showing how different philosophers explored the master-slave theme in their respective philosophical projects, thereby reorganizing existing thought and generating new thought on the theme. The second objective in this module is to engage the readings in the philosophy unit to consider how the genealogy of the master-slave theme gives us perspective and insight into the origins and subsequent development of two different kinds of philosophical hermeneutics, a hermeneutics of suspicion and a hermeneutics of affirmation and openness. Further, we consider the dialectical tension between these two kinds of hermeneutics in the writings of Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx, Butler, Gadamer, and Habermas. Our third objective is to think about how the Nietzschean-Hegelian-Marxian perspective on the genealogy and hermeneutics of the master-slave theme might help us gain insight into intersectionality and contemporary struggles and insecurities around the politics of class, race, identity, multiculturalism, gender and sexuality. This last objective will also motivate discussion on relevant struggles within the field of philosophy, as seen in the appropriation and interpretation of the master-slave theme in contemporary poststructuralist and postmodern philosophy.

The final module of this course will provide a historical view of the master slave dialectic. Firstly, we will be discussing the history of slavery in the ancient world, especially in Greek and Roman societies. The ethnic diversity of slavery in the Classical world, slave uprisings, and the decline of slavery in the late-Ancient Age are all relevant issues. The module will then proceed to analyze the main aspects of slavery in the modern world and the main differences and similarities between ancient and modern slavery. Special emphasis will be placed on the role of slavery in North America during European colonization. The module will then tackle the religious and moral dilemmas faced by Spanish and Portuguese colonizers regarding the enslavement of native Americans, their decision to enslave Africans and how slaves resisted. Readings will include Dale Tomich’s *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy*; Ira Berlin’s *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*; Boris Fausto’s *A Concise History of Brazil*, Gilberto Freyre’s *The Masters and the Slaves*, as well as several articles.

HUM 200: World Historical Figures: Leadership, Judgment, and Authority

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

This CH core course explores leadership and the mechanisms of authority and power in world history. In Spring 2022 this course has been subtitled: **Toussaint Louverture and Simón Bolívar**.

Simón Bolívar (1783-1830) and Toussaint Louverture (1743-1803) were two key leaders of the independence movements that spread across Latin America in the early 19th century. While Bolívar led the patriotic armies that defeated Spanish colonialism in South America and contributed to the liberation of Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, Toussaint was one of the leaders of the slave uprising that culminated with the Haitian independence from French colonial rule. The purpose of this course is to delve into these two mythical figures for the History of the modern world in order to understand their political projects, their ambitions, their triumphs, and their disappointments. 200 years after the proclamation of independences in Latin America, a reasonable understanding of how these independence movements unfolded is of utmost importance to critically analyze the current situation of those countries.

Instead of approaching these two leaders as isolated figures, we will strive to understand the cultural, social, and political contexts in which they were inserted and how both helped shaping those contexts. The notions of leadership, judgment, and authority will be our guiding principles. Rather than the uncontested leaders that a more romantic narrative could portray, both faced challenges to their authorities and had to negotiate with other historical actors who had divergent projects. Hence, our readings will also shed some light on the challenges posed to the authority of those leaders and on how they strived to overcome them. Moreover, we will also focus on how these two figures have been judged by different narratives in the Haitian and South American societies in the past decades. To which extent is Toussaint considered a hero in today’s



Haiti? How has Hugo Chávez, in Venezuela, appropriated and idealized Simón Bolívar to legitimize his “socialism of the 21st century”?

The course is divided in four modules. The first module tackles the Haitian Revolution, the second independence in the American continent and the only one to be proclaimed by slaves. The second module delves into the figure of Toussaint Louverture, one of the distinguished leaders of the Haitian Revolution. The third module covers the independence process in South America by highlighting its antecedents, its challenges, and its outcomes. Lastly, the fourth and final module analyses the role played by Simón Bolívar in this process, as well as the clashes with other leaders.

HUM 301: Comparative Hermeneutics I: Major Works and Traditions Seminar

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

This third-year seminar will continue work with major thinkers and traditions in dialogue, but take students deeper into more localized tensions within the field. The goal will be to examine an academic debate or problem of some sophistication within the discipline, or between several disciplines. Students will work with one or two key figures to help deepen their understanding of that debate, or attempt to initiate their own related line of inquiry based on close work with one or two central figures.

HUM 300: Criticism, Dissent and the Ethics of Disagreement

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

This will be a 300-level course on social responsibility and the ethics of disagreement. In this course we will engage students in complex and contentious arguments in the humanities through the works of prominent public intellectuals with the goal of enhancing their capacities to participate forcefully, effectively and respectfully in civil discourse.

HUM 401: Comparative Hermeneutics II: Major Works and Traditions Seminar

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

This course will serve as a senior seminar, ideally as a preliminary study or as a complement to the capstone research seminar (HUM 402), which will challenge students to define a compelling problem, project, or line of inquiry that requires extended critical analysis and work with several texts, traditions, or disciplines in conversation.

Examples of these Senior-level deepening seminars may include in-depth studies of Marx, Agamben, Poststructuralism, Gadamer, Feminism, the Anthropocene, Postcolonial theory, James Joyce, environmentalism, Sufism, etc., depending on faculty interest and availability. Students will be expected to focus on a central thinker, key work, major period, influential religious movement, school or doctrine for close examination.

HUM 402 - Capstone Research Seminar

Credit Hours: 4

Prerequisites: None

Fulfills: CH Core

The final course of the deepening sequence in the CH core sequence will be a workshop course for the Seniors working on their capstone projects or senior thesis.



REQUIRED CONCENTRATION COURSES:

1. Philosophy Concentration

PHIL 200: What is Philosophy?

Taking a comparative approach to the subject matter, this course investigates the original writings of a range of contemporary philosophers, where they have problematised and responded to the "what is philosophy?" question. The writings under consideration help us grapple with differing frameworks and conceptual lenses for generating clarity on the fundamental question of philosophy, and the process, work, purpose, and history of philosophy. This course calls for consistent focus on careful reading, writing, research, presentation assignments, and intensive class participation commitment. The philosophers whose writings we consider this semester include: Noam Chomsky, Michel Foucault, Martha Nussbaum, Alain Badiou, Louis Althusser, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Reza Negarestani, Jean Francois Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Anne Dufourmantelle, and Jaun Elia.

PHIL 122: Introduction to Western Philosophy?

This course aims to provide a systematic introduction to the main problems of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics, as addressed in the Western philosophical tradition. It familiarises students with central debates in Western philosophy and permits them an overview of the works of some of the discipline's most pertinent thinkers. It does so by pointing out long-term traditions of Western philosophical thought as well as their implications for contemporary intellectual discourse. It engages with several important issues concerning the nature of knowledge, truth, self, reality, consciousness, morality, language, and God. Along with reading texts by classic figures such as Plato, Descartes, Hume, and Kant, students will also get to study modern and contemporary thinkers such as Simone de Beauvoir, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Edmund Husserl, Hannah Arendt, Martha Nussbaum, and Derrida. Students will learn to engage with various philosophical issues critically, to compare them analytically, and to translate what they mean for the present. In so doing, students will acquire the critical analytical vocabulary to understand our current socio-political predicament in a reflected and philosophically informed way.

2. Literature Concentration

LIT 104: What is World Literature?

This course is an introduction to literary study that develops students' critical reading skills through the analysis of poetry, prose, drama, and/or film. Themes of the course will focus on the ways different individuals, societies, and cultures represent themselves in literature, and how we read and interpret those forms of representation through the application of basic critical literary tools and theories.

LIT 225: Introduction to Literary Theory & Criticism

This course explores the major theories of reading and interpreting literature that developed throughout the twentieth century. *Introduction to Literary Theory & Criticism* attempts to answer a range of questions central to the nature of literary experience. It examines the production of value and meaning in works of art, grapples with the mediating power of history and culture in framing how we understand those works, and highlights the role of tropes and formal elements like imagery, metaphor, symbol, genre, and narrative in shaping how we experience texts aesthetically. Literary theory also explores questions of authorship and intertextuality, gender and agency, and language and representation. In reflecting on these questions, students will engage critically with some of the most influential theorists, schools of thought, and conceptual problems that have come to define literary studies in the past century, ranging from practical criticism to semiotics to poststructuralism. As a final project, students will undertake a theoretically informed "reading" of a text of their choice.

3. History Concentration

HIST/SDP 190: (Global Histories) Military Regimes in South Asia and South America

In line with Habib's emphasis on the postcolonial world and on a global approach of History, the purpose of this course is to analyze and understand the history of military regimes in South Asia and South America.



Though not ignoring the role of local factors, the main concern of this course will be to encourage students to identify a common background that led to the emergence of military regimes in both regions. The Cold War bipolarity, U.S. efforts to prevent the dissemination of left-wing regimes in the periphery, and a widespread anticommunist imaginary that transcended borders are all significant parts of this common background that will be contemplated by the readings and class discussions. Hence, rather than seeing these military regimes as sole products of local or regional politics, this course encourages us to think them as parts of a broader international picture of the Cold War in which the Third World was a stage of clashes between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The course will begin with readings on how the Cold War unfolded in South Asia and South America, as well as the role played by these regions in North American foreign policy. The second module encompasses military regimes in Pakistan. We will understand the circumstances that triggered the military coups of 1958 and 1977, as well as the main aspects of these regimes. The third and last module approaches the History of military regimes in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, highlighting their differences and similarities. As we discuss the main aspects of South American military regimes, we will also strive to find differences and similarities between them and the Pakistani military regimes.

Readings and discussions will be guided by relevant questions, such as: what was the U.S. role in these military coups? To which extent the governments they brought to power were part of the Cold War clashes? How did these governments portray the East-West cleavage? Despite U.S. intervention, were there also tensions between Washington and these military regimes?

HIST 227: Understanding Histories: Historiography and Historical Methods

The aim of this course is to develop the historiographical and analytical skills necessary for students to conduct advanced research in the historical field. It is intended for history majors and minors to make the jump from learning specific histories to thinking more broadly about studying the past. It introduces students to trends in modern historiography, which, while meaning the literal writing of history, is also used to refer to theories of history and the history of “history” as an academic field.

Sampling a range of texts, we will explore some fundamental components of historical thinking, including ideas about context and causation, methods of historical analysis, issues of truth and objectivity and conflicting interpretations within historical approaches and genres. Through intensive reading, discussions and written essays, we will look into the methods and rich varieties of historical inquiry, the dynamic nature of scholarship and some of the recent shifts in the discipline.

The course asks students to think about a range of questions related to the discipline: What is history? How have historians approached the study of the past? How and why have there been changes in approaches to the study of history?

4. Religious Studies Concentration

RELS 122: An Introduction to World Religions

This is the required foundational course for both the primary and secondary concentrations in Religious Studies for majors in the Comparative Humanities (CH) program. It is also the required gateway course for students in any other major at Habib who wish to complete a minor in Religious Studies. Finally, this course may also be taken as a lower-level elective by any student who is simply curious to learn something about the major world religions.

The course is designed to fulfill two critical objectives. The first objective is to develop a sound introductory level understanding of five great world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism). Collectively, these five religions account for 6.1 billion of the world’s 7.79 billion people. Of the 1.69 billion people not covered by these five major world religions, 1.19 billion people are classified as “secular,” “nonreligious” or “agnostic/atheist.” It’s important to emphasize the word “introduction” in the title of this course. It would be easy to spend a lifetime studying each of these religions, so no one course can do more than scratch the surface. It’s also important to stress that no religion can be distilled down to some essential core, and one of the recurring themes of this course will be the tension between unifying aspects of the tradition and the tremendous diversity that exists within all religions. Similarly, religions don’t exist in the abstract, they exist in the context of specific times and cultures, which both shape and are shaped by religion.



A second objective of this course is that it is also designed to introduce you to the scholarly humanistic study of religion. What does this mean? First, let's consider what the humanities are. They are an interrelated series of academic disciplines that explore what it means and has meant to be human across both time and geographical space. And, as we'll discuss in greater detail in a moment, from our earliest historical records of abstract human thought, religion seems to have been universally central to human expressions of meaning. Therefore, at its most basic level, we can say that the humanistic study of religion understands religion as a fundamental and irreducible dimension of human experience and expression. Because religion has been so central to human expression of meaning, especially to understandings of ultimate meaning, religion has long and often been fiercely contested both within and across religious traditions. Thus, it's important to understand that humanistic scholars of religion strive neither to privilege nor to denigrate any religion. Their purpose is to understand the critical role that religion has and continues to play in expressing human meaning. However, we must also acknowledge from the outset that it has not always been this way. The modern scholarly humanistic project to study religion has not always valued either empathy or objectivity as it does today. This academic discipline, like other disciplines in the humanities, evolved out of earlier efforts by scholars firmly rooted in their own religious tradition to study other religions with the primary aim of proving them false or inferior to the scholar's own religious tradition. We are still living within the shadow of those earlier highly partisan scholarly agendas, so it should not be surprising that many people are still very skeptical about the goals of modern scholarly humanistic inquiry into religion. It's important that we be aware of this burden of history in the field of religious studies, but we should not allow it to paralyze us. The earliest evidence we have of complex abstract human thought are cave paintings found on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. These paintings are at least 43,900 years old, and may be as old as 50,000 years. Featured in these ancient cave paintings are hunting scenes with figurative depictions of both animals and therianthropes, which are spiritual beings who are part human and part animal. The therianthropes usually carry spears, so these seem to be hunting scenes in which the power of supernatural forces are being invoked to ensure a successful hunt. What this implies is that the oldest records we have of complex abstract human thought involve religious thought. Long before these ancient cave paintings were found, humanist scholars of myth and religion, observing the intrinsic quality and universality of religion as a fundamental category of human thought, had come to the conclusion that our own hominid species, known by the scientific name *homo sapiens* (or "the wise human"), might more accurately be described as *homo religious* ("the religious human"). In other words, from a historical perspective, religion seems to be integral to what it has meant to be human, so it's not surprising that humanities scholars have long been interested in understanding religion. Due to the universality of religion, its character as integral to the human experience and the diverse complex ways that religion is reflected in the human experience, it should come as no surprise that the academic study of religion is itself somewhat complicated and multifaceted. Religious Studies, as a field of academic inquiry, is somewhat different from many academic disciplines in that it doesn't really have its own distinctive methodology. Instead, the academic study of religion is inherently interdisciplinary in the sense that it appropriates the various approaches and methods used by other disciplines to answer various questions about religion. Some of the major methodological approaches employed by academic scholars of religion include: literary and textual criticism, historical studies, a variety of anthropological, sociological, and psychological approaches, philosophical investigations and comparative phenomenological approaches to studying religion. This is where things start to get messy, because there are also scholars in each of these other disciplines, like anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, literary studies and philosophy who also study aspects of religion. So what differentiates a scholar in the field of religious studies from say a historian of religion, or an anthropologist of religion or a sociologist of religion? To some extent it might be argued that the distinction is one of emphasis. This means that historians or sociologists of religion tend to focus their attention on historical or sociological questions regarding religion, whereas religious studies scholars focus on some aspect of religion and are more likely to apply multiple disciplinary approaches to the questions they study. In other words they are less likely to be as bound by time and place as say a historian of religion might be in considering some aspect of religion. However, this distinction is not reliable, and the fact is that disciplinary boundaries are increasingly artificial as all academic fields today embrace interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches in their research. We need to say a bit more about the academic and humanistic study of religion. Many religious studies scholars have their own religious beliefs. Others have none. Many of those with their own personal religious beliefs are very successfully able to study religious traditions other than their own. How is this possible? The reason is because those engaged in the modern academic and humanistic study of religion, regardless of their own personal religious



beliefs, or lack of religious beliefs, hold themselves to a shared professional standard in which it's viewed as crucial to strive for as objective a view of their subject as possible. Complete objectivity, of course, is impossible, and no serious scholar of religion would claim that they are completely devoid of any bias. We are all human, and no one is completely free of bias. However, because religious studies scholars seek to understand religion from the perspectives of those within the traditions they study, these scholars try very hard to bracket their own religious beliefs, or lack of belief, and engage in what is sometimes called structured empathy. What "structured empathy" means is that scholars try, to the best of their ability, to convey how the questions they are studying are understood within the tradition itself, and in a way that believers within the tradition would readily recognize and acknowledge as authentic. As we've already acknowledged, it has not always been this way. One only needs to read the work of earlier scholars in the field of religious studies to find numerous examples of religious polemic, where the scholars clearly had an agenda to promote their own religion and denigrate the religions of others by way of comparison. This unfortunate history of scholarship in religious studies, as we've described, is tied to the historical evolution of the field as an academic discipline. However, this unfortunate intellectual history leaves many outside the academy skeptical that the project of an objective academic study of religion is even possible. We will continue to consider this question throughout this course.

Finally, the academic field of religious studies is distinct from the academic field known as theology. The word theology might best be defined as "god talk." It's also a serious academic field, but it primarily takes place within a particular religious tradition among those who identify as believers within that tradition. To be sure, some theologians are genuinely interested in discourse across religious traditions, but the primary focus of most theological studies are discussions and debates among believers about issues of common concern. Whereas religious studies scholars strive for objectivity as they work very hard to bracket their own religious beliefs, theologians are often taking a firm stand and arguing for a particular position within their own religious tradition. They are, in fact, very much part of the ongoing living discourse within their religious tradition – they are not trying to present a disinterested account of the debate. In other words, theologians are usually very much part of the debate, they are not attempting to describe the debate from as neutral a position as possible in the way that a religious studies scholar might. The point here is not that one purpose is better than the other, but rather that you understand that the purposes of theology and religious studies are very different.

Even this difference between theology and religious studies can become confusing, however, because some scholars wear two hats – they are both recognized theologians within their own religious traditions and religious studies scholars, who are equally respected as serious scholars in the academic field known as religious studies. Such scholars are usually very clear about which hat they are wearing in each specific context. However, to outsiders the fact that a theologian in one tradition could also be simultaneously engaged in the objective study of other traditions as a religious studies scholar is highly suspect and even unbelievable.

In an introductory level course like this we cannot introduce you to all of the methodological approaches that define the modern discipline of religious studies, but we will introduce you to at least three important approaches used in the field as we investigate five of the great world religions. Our hope is that you will gain an appreciation for how scholars in religious studies use interdisciplinary approaches to study religion as an essential aspect of the human experience. The three approaches that we will apply to each of the five traditions we will be studying in this class are the historical, literary/textual analysis and the comparative phenomenological approach. Therefore, in each unit you will notice a repetitive pattern as we: (1) consider the historical development of each tradition; (2) examine a core sacred text from the tradition; and (3) consider and compare a common phenomenon across all five religions' traditions. In this case we will focus on comparing rituals of worship. One could, of course, make other choices in comparative phenomenology. For example, we could choose to study marriage, dietary, pilgrimage or death rituals across different religious traditions. But in this class, we will be focusing on rituals of worship and what those rituals teach us about ideas of the sacred in each tradition.

RELS 223: Comparative approaches, methods and key issues in the study of religion

The study of religion arguably represents one of the most stimulating field of research today in the humanities and social sciences. But what is "religion" and how are we to approach it academically? Totally in sync with the overall vision of the CH program, this course will evolve as a comparative and



transdisciplinary approach to religious studies. This course will expose students to fundamental theoretical and methodological issues in the academic study of religion. It will also explore ways or lenses through which the study of religion could be approached by introducing students to classic works and authors (Durkheim, Weber, Freud, Marx, James, etc.), and also examining their legacy and continuing influence upon the field of religious studies. In addition to familiarizing students with a variety of approaches to understanding religion (as a social phenomenon, an “experience,” and a body of lived practices), the course gives attention to the construction of the category of “religion,” ethical issues involved in the study of religion, and issues and topics (gender, secularism, pluralism, postcolonialism).



LIST OF ELECTIVES:

Below is the proposed list of elective courses offered by the CH Major. These elective courses may be subject to change.

Fall 2021

HIST 122 - Introduction to the History of Science and Mathematics

HIST/LIT 228/236 - Russian Literature and History of the 19th and Early 20th Century

HIST/SDP 190 - (Global Histories) Military Regimes-South Asia & South America

HIST/SDP 329 - The Global Post-Colony

LIT 104 - What is World Literature: Introduction to the Study of World

LIT 205 - Kon Sitare Chhoo Sakta Hai: A Study of Metaphors

LIT 225 - Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism

LIT 326 - Housing Society se Taus Chaman Tak: A journey through Urdu Novella

MUS 101 - Music of South Asia: Styles and Structures

MUS 111 - Breathing Bansuri

MUS 222 - Sound and Subjectivity: Listening to the Other

MUS 223 - Khayal Gayeki: The Aesthetics and Evolution of a Vocal Form

PHIL 122 - Introduction to Western Philosophy

PHIL 200 - What is Philosophy?

PHIL 221 - Medieval Islamic Philosophy

PHIL/COM 219 - Tragic Philosophy and Film

PHIL/REL 327 - Spirituality, Philosophy and Science

REL 122 - World Religions

REL/ANT 252 - Anthropology of Religion

REL/HIST 233 - Religion in Modernity: Adaptation and Reinvention

Spring 2022

ANT/MUS 203 - Musicking: Anthropology of Music

HIST 327 - Understanding Histories: Historiography and Methods

HIST 330 - The Russian Revolutions and Their Legacies

LIT 300 - The (Post) Colony: Theory and Text

LIT 407 - Bushido, Feminism, & Pre- and Post-World War II Japanese Literature

LIT/CND 230 - Poetry and Prose in English

LIT/CND 261 - The Art of Fiction I - Fairy Tales

MUS 225 - Ghazal Gayeki: A Cultural Legacy of South Asia

MUS/HIS 221/253 - Humari Meeraas: History and Discourse of South Asian Music

PHIL 122 - Introduction to Western Philosophy

PHIL 326 - Philosophical Hermeneutics

PHIL/LIT 345 - Jaun Elia and Philosophy

PHIL/SDP 222 - What is Power? Foucault, Biopolitics & Critical Thinking

REL 223 - Approaches, methods and key issues in the study of religion

REL 322 - The Many faces of the Sufi tradition

REL/ANT 100 - Jamal: Islamic Aesthetic and Design

Fall 2022

HIST 332 - History of Brazilian independence

LIT 104 - What is World Literature: Introduction to the Study of World

LIT 310 - Urdu and Global Voices: Translations of Modern Fiction and Poetry

LIT 313 - Postcolonial Literatures of Migration and Exile

LIT/CND 362 - The Art of Fiction II - Contemporary Short Stories

MUS 101 - Music of South Asia: Styles and Structures

MUS 111 - Breathing Bansuri

MUS 222 - Sound and Subjectivity: Listening to the Other



MUS 227 - Thumri ki Kahani: Romance in Raag Form

PHIL 122 - Introduction to Western Philosophy

PHIL 200 - What is Philosophy?

PHIL 221 - Medieval Islamic Philosophy

PHIL/REL 327 - Spirituality, Philosophy and Science

REL 122 - World Religions

REL 223 - Approaches, methods and key issues in the study of religion

REL 100 - Jamal: Islamic Aesthetic and Design

REL/ANT 252 - Anthropology of Religion



GRADUATING REQUIREMENTS:

1. 124 credit-hours (minimum) and 37 courses (minimum), completed with passing grades.
2. Completion of:
 - 7- course program CH core sequence,
 - Either a double concentration or one primary and one secondary concentration.
3. Capstone research paper, written in HUM 402: Capstone Research Seminar, earning a passing grade (C minus) by the instructor/s.
 - Evaluation of capstone paper in HUM 402 will determine if it has the potential to develop into a thesis. A minus on the capstone paper is a minimally required qualification for students to pursue the possibility of writing a final thesis.
4. An E-Portfolio, compiled over 8 semesters of study, and evaluated as satisfactory by committee upon completion of capstone.
5. Final thesis, which is a requirement for students graduating with distinction, and with Program approval* for other students in the program,
 - Requires an additional Independent Study of 3 CH in the 8th semester, with the student's thesis advisor.

* Any student who earns A minus in HUM 402 is effectively eligible to write the final thesis. Therefore, the final thesis is a possibility for students who do not fulfill the additional criteria for graduating with distinction.

4-YEAR GRID:

Comparative Humanities - 4-year Grid - Batch 2025
Minimum Requirements - 37 courses (124* credit hours) - ver 18

Sem I	Sem II	Sem III	Sem IV	Sem V	Sem VI	Sem VII	Sem VIII
CORE 101 Rhetoric and Communication (4 Cr)	CORE 102 What is Modernity (4 Cr)	CORE 201 PAMSA (4 Cr)	CORE 202 Hikma I (4 Cr)	Scientific Methods (3 Cr)	Creative Practice (min 3 Cr)	Any level HIST, LIT, PHIL, RELS elective 1 of 2 (min 3 Cr)	Any level HIST, LIT, PHIL, RELS elective 2 of 2 (min 3 Cr)
HUM 101: Critical Inquiry and the Humanities 1 of 7 (4 Cr)	Primary Concentration Requirement 1 of 2 (min 3 Cr)	HUM 201: Conceptual Genealogies 2 of 7 (4 Cr)	HUM 200 World Historical Figures: Leadership, Judgment, and Authority 3 of 7 (4 Cr)	HUM 301: Comparative Hermeneutics I (Major Works and Traditions Seminar) 4 of 7 (4 Cr)	HUM 401: Comparative Hermeneutics II (A Major Work in Dialogue with its Tradition Seminar) 5 of 7 (4 Cr)	HUM 402: Capstone Research Seminar 7 of 7 (4 Cr)	Free Elective 7 of 8 (min 3 Cr)
HLC Philosophical FoT Requirement (min 3 Cr)	Primary Concentration Requirement 2 of 2 (**PHIL concentration elective 1 of 5) (min 3 Cr)	Primary Concentration Elective 1 of 4 (**PHIL concentration elective 2 of 5) (min 3 Cr)	Primary Concentration Elective 2 of 4 (**PHIL concentration elective 3 of 5) (min 3 Cr)	Primary Concentration Upper-level Elective 3 of 4 (**PHIL concentration Upper-level elective 4 of 5) (min 3 Cr)	HUM 300 Criticism Dissent and the Ethics of Disagreement 6 of 7 (4 Cr)	Free Elective 6 of 8 (min 3 Cr)	***Free Elective 8 of 8 (min 3 Cr) or ***Independent Study (IS) (min 3 Cr)
Formal Reasoning (Either CORE 111 or CS 101) (min 3 Cr)	CORE 121 Jehan-e-Urdu (4 Cr)	Quantitative Reasoning (min 3 Cr)	Secondary Concentration Requirement 1 of 2 (min 3 Cr)	Secondary Concentration Requirement 2 of 2 (**PHIL concentration elective 1 of 3) (min 3 Cr)	Primary Concentration Upper-level Elective 4 of 4 (**PHIL concentration Upper-level elective 5 of 5) (min 3 Cr)	Secondary Concentration Elective 1 of 2 (**PHIL concentration elective 2 of 3) (min 3 Cr)	Secondary Concentration Upper-level Elective 2 of 2 (**PHIL concentration Upper-level elective 3 of 3) (min 3 Cr)
Free Elective 1 of 8 (min 3 Cr)	Free Elective 2 of 8 (min 3 Cr)	Free Elective 3 of 8 (min 3 Cr)	Free Elective 4 of 8 (min 3 Cr)	Free Elective 5 of 8 (min 3 Cr)			

Min Cr Hrs

17

17

17

17

16

14

13

12

Legends

Liberal Core
(10 courses)

Program Core
(07 courses)

Primary Concentration
(06 courses)

Secondary Concentration
(4 courses)

CH Electives
(02 courses)

Free Elective
(8 courses)

* Electives (program/free) need to be taken so that over all total credit hours are 124

**PHIL concentration at primary & secondary level has only 01 Required Course. Rest are all electives

*** Students, pursuing thesis option, are to take an IS (min 3 Cr Hrs) in lieu of free elective 8 of 8.

Note 1 - Students can double count free electives in the grid towards completion of requirements for declared concentrations in HIST, LIT, PHIL, or RELS. This is applicable for students pursuing beyond the minimally required one primary and one secondary concentration.

Note 2 - Two electives within Primary Concentration and one elective within Secondary Concentration must be upper-level electives.



Graduating Requirements (class of 2025) - minimum 37 courses & minimum 124 credit hours - ver 18	
Course Category	# of Courses to complete
University Requirements	
Habib University Liberal Core	10
CH CORE Sequence	
HUM Required Courses for Major	7
HUM 101: Critical Inquiry and the Humanities Broadening sequence in program core	1
HUM 201: Conceptual Genealogies Broadening sequence in program core	1
HUM 301: Comparative Hermeneutics I (Major Works and Traditions Seminar) Deepening sequence in program core	1
HUM 401: Comparative Hermeneutics II (A Major Work in Dialogue with its Tradition Seminar) Deepening sequence in program core	1
HUM 402: Capstone Research Seminar Deepening sequence in program core	1
HUM 200 World Historical Figures: Leadership, Judgment, and Authority	1
HUM 300: Criticism, Dissent and the Ethics of Disagreement	1
CH Primary Concentration (any one out of the following PHIL, RELS, HIST, LIT sequences)	
Philosophy, Literature, History, and Religious Studies Required Courses for the Primary Concentration. Choose any 1 out of the given 4 sequences for primary concentration.	6
Philosophy	
PHIL 200: What is Philosophy? or PHIL 122: Introduction to Western Philosophy	
PHIL Elective Any Level	
PHIL Elective Any Level	
PHIL Elective Any Level	
PHIL 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
PHIL 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
Literature	
LIT 1xx/2xx What is World Literature?	
LIT 225: Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism	
LIT Elective Any Level	
LIT Elective Any Level	
LIT 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
LIT 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
History	
HIST 1xx / 2xx Global Histories	
HIST 227 Understanding Histories: Historiography and Historical Methods	
HIST Elective Any Level	
HIST Elective Any Level	
HIST 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
HIST 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
Religious Studies	
RELS 1xx Introduction to World Religions / What is World Religion?	
RELS 223 Comparative approaches, methods and key issues in the study of religion	
RELS Elective Any Level	
RELS Elective Any Level	
RELS 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
RELS 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
CH Secondary Concentration (One out of the following PHIL, RELS, HIST, LIT sequences)	
Philosophy, Literature, History, and Religious Studies Required Courses for the Secondary Concentration, choose any one 1 out of the given 4 sequences for secondary concentration	4
Philosophy	
PHIL 200: What is Philosophy? or PHIL 122: Introduction to Western Philosophy	
PHIL Elective Any Level	
PHIL Elective Any Level	
PHIL 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
Literature	
LIT 1xx/2xx What is World Literature?	
LIT 225: Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism	
LIT Elective Any Level	
LIT 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
History	
HIST 1xx / 2xx Global Histories	
HIST 227 Understanding Histories: Historiography and Historical Methods	
HIST Elective Any Level	
HIST 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
Religious Studies	
RELS 1xx Introduction to World Religions / What is World Religion?	
RELS 223 Comparative approaches, methods and key issues in the study of religion	
RELS Elective Any Level	
RELS 3xx / 4xx Level Elective	
Other Requirements	
CH Electives	2
CH Elective - Any level HIST, LIT, PHIL, RELS elective	
Any university elective/free elective	7
Any university elective/free elective (if not taking Thesis option) Or an Independent Study (if taking thesis option)	1
Overall	37
<i>Note - a cross-listed CH elective course can only be counted once in either cross-listed concentration area</i>	



E-PORTFOLIO:

Comparative Humanities students will compile an e-portfolio as they progress throughout their eight semesters of study. The e-portfolio will appear on the students' academic transcript as a zero-credit hour requirement for graduation.

What constitutes the e-portfolio?

1. Sample work from the 7-course core sequence.
2. Draft of senior year thesis (for students writing the thesis).
3. Upper division (300 and 400 level) work completed within the two concentration areas.
4. Independently produced intellectual and creative work (encouraged, not required).
5. Produced and curated as an online artefact on Habib University's CANVAS website. (After graduation, students will have autonomy over choice of platform for their e-portfolios, and how public or private they want their e-portfolio to be.)

Portfolios will be evaluated by a committee upon completion of the final semester of study. This is a process of qualitative assessment, where "exemplary" and "satisfactory" are markers indicating the quality of work. The committee will be appointed by the program at the start of the final semester of study, and students will be notified accordingly.

What are the criteria for qualitative assessment?

1. Completeness, in relation to the constituents listed above. (This would be a "satisfactory" e-portfolio, fulfilling the minimal requirement to graduate)
2. Is there an element of design in the production of the portfolio? (Element of design meaning creativity, imagination, and hard work, so that the e-portfolio is much more than a compilation of documents on a web portal)
3. Is there evidence of intellectual growth over the course of study? (a brief narrative account or infographic would suffice [but some textual evidence of revision in your capstone or thesis would be most welcome])
4. Does the portfolio present some evidence of critical self-reflection and rewriting? (a brief narrative account, drafts/revisions or infographic would suffice [other ways of fulfilling this requirement include but are not limited to: video essay or viva report from a faculty member])

Note: evaluation of 2, 3, and 4 combined will determine whether the portfolio merits the distinction of exemplarity, which is a requirement for graduating with honors.