With highly flexible coursework options, our cultural studies and comparative literature major offers you the opportunity to pursue questions and ways of knowing that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. You’ll study culture as a set of complex connections and interrelations: between texts and everyday life, ideas and the material world, discourse and power.

The CSCL major strives for a broad, international scope, ranging widely across history and geography. The central focus is on the cultural mechanisms through which a society’s ways of knowing, value systems, and individual and collective identities are generated, disseminated, challenged, and reinvented. You’ll be prepared to actively participate in the intellectual conversations and social struggles that shape global culture in our time as a critical and self-critical reader.

The College of Liberal Arts Advantage: More Than a Major

When you study Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Minnesota, you gain the added advantage of a College of Liberal Arts education. At CLA, the liberal arts mean you get more than just a degree in one major or another; it means you will be exposed to different areas of study, to different ways of thinking and learning. In fact, the liberal arts teach you how to learn—how to ask the right questions, how to problem solve, and how to innovate. The liberal arts highlight the complexities of our world, because here at CLA you will study not just, say, politics or art but also where politics and art intersect, where science and ethics intersect, where economics and the environment intersect.
Meet Our Students

Senior Elizabeth Schleisman is the recipient of four scholarships this semester. The College of Liberal Arts, The Tower, and the University of Minnesota Press all helped towards making her dreams come true. “It’s going just fantastic so far, I’ve definitely learned more than I could have just by sitting in a classroom, so I’m really grateful for that opportunity,” says Schleisman about her internship experience.

Read more about Elizabeth's story, and learn more about our undergraduate program.

Student Experiences

Internships in Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature: Gain Valuable Experience in the Twin Cities and Beyond

Did you know? Our department has its very own internship reflection course! Students taking an internship can use this course to reflect on ways that their work experience is preparing them for successful careers - and receive credit for the work.

Learning Abroad Options in Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature: Prepare to Lead in a Global Economy

“For many of our students, study abroad turns out to be the single most educationally enriching, indeed life-altering experience they have as an undergraduate. I can’t recommend it highly enough.”
—Gary Thomas, Director of Undergraduate Studies
Learn more about study abroad for CSCL majors.

Student Organizations: Find Friends and Grow as a Leader

- CSCL Student Association

Undergraduate Research: Shape Your Curiosity into New Knowledge

The University has funding opportunities available for undergraduates who wish to gain research experience. Programs such as the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) gives undergraduate students the chance to work closely with faculty members on research projects. Full information about this can be found in Undergraduate Research Opportunities.

Meet Our Faculty

“I think any department that should survive needs to evolve because the world doesn’t stand still,” says Regents Professor Emeritus Richard Leppert. Leppert discusses the evolution of the CSCL department over time and his love for teaching.

Read more about Professor Leppert's work.
“When you are teaching literature, there is no set of truths that everybody adheres to,” says Assistant Professor Christian Uwe. He was born in Rwanda, studied in France, and now made his way to Minnesota. See how his background has influenced his field of study: sub-Saharan and Caribbean Francophone literatures.

Read more about Professor Uwe's work.

Meet Our Alumni

Marianna Mattes has a passion for film and a love for making sense of the world around us. Now under the guidance of award-winning filmmaker Melody Gilbert, Mattes credits CLA with giving her the skills to pursue a career in film.

Read more about Marianna's story.

CLA Graduates: Successful Careers and Purposeful Lives

CLA graduates succeed in many different careers — law, health care, medicine, business, government, teaching, advertising, arts and entertainment, international relations, and more — precisely because they understand how to navigate a
complex and interconnected world. As our alumni explain below, “Being a good employee means being curious, and continuing to evolve, and learn, and educate yourself, and I can think of no stronger foundation for doing that than a liberal arts education.

“An education in the liberal arts is a springboard to lifelong career success”
-- Dean John Coleman

You might also explore

- Studies in Cinema and Media Culture
- Communication Studies
- Global Studies
- History

Associated Careers

Arts Administrator, Archivist, Communications Specialist, Book Reviewer, Cultural Events Coordinator, Film Critic, Editor, Literary Agent, Professor, Publicist, Story Editor, Teacher, Writer

Admission Information
FRESHMAN:  Admission information

TRANSFER STUDENTS: Requirements for the College of Liberal Arts

Beyond admission, if you have questions about transferring, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) has transfer advisors to help. Please feel free to contact them about any of the topics below!

- Course plans before transferring
- Estimated time to graduation
- Career preparation in CLA
- Getting ready for orientation, if admitted
- Connecting with major/minor departments