

## Comparative Literature: Poetics (A005801)

**Course size** *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

**Credits 5.0** **Study time 150 h**

**Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027**

A (semester 1) Dutch Gent

**Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027**

Pieters, Jurgén LW07 lecturer-in-charge

**Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027**

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - English)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - French)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - German)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Swedish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - German)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Swedish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - English)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - German)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Swedish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject German - Swedish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Latin - Swedish)	5	A
Elective Set Literature	5	A

**Teaching languages**

Dutch

**Keywords**

Literature, medicine, bibliotherapy, consolation

**Position of the course**

In this advanced course, a historical survey of the poetical debates that have governed the development of Western literature is given. How did one reflect on literature and how does one try to understand and explain the importance of literary texts in the intellectual development of individuals and groups. The historical approach is meant to result in a deeper understanding of our ideas on literature today. The focus of this year's (26-27) course is on the idea that the reading of literary texts can have therapeutic effects in specific contexts of care - illness, mental suffering, grief.

### **Contents**

Bibliotherapy is an age-old practice and conviction: the idea that the reading of texts can have a wholesome effect - c.q. a highly negative impact - is a central point of discussion in Antiquity. Plato famously points out the dangers of poetry, while Aristotle is convinced of its positive, kathartic outcome.

The 'Greek' debate is the starting point of this course in which we will try to identify a number of arguments that have been central in the recent flourishing of bibliotherapy and in the work of a number of literary scholars who have helped give rise to the field of the so-called 'health humanities', a field of research in which a plea is being held for the importance of a humane and holistic form of care, in which patients and people in need of care are not being reduced to the illness or condition from which they suffer.

In this course we will read a number of key texts from different historical periods that have been central to the development of this rich field and that have shaped the specific position assumed by literary writings in this interdisciplinary field. We will read and discuss essays and other literary writings which allow for a deeper reflection on topics like illness, grief and mental instability.

### **Initial competences**

To have a basic knowledge of literary theory and analysis.

### **Final competences**

- 1 To have a thorough understanding of the poetical debates that determined and shaped Western conceptions of literary culture.
- 2 To be able to situate poetical texts in their cultural historical context.
- 3 To be able to analyse the rhetorical structure of poetical texts.
- 4 To be able to relate poetical debates to literary-historical developments.
- 5 To be able to connect poetical arguments to artistic debates.

### **Conditions for credit contract**

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

### **Conditions for exam contract**

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

### **Teaching methods**

Seminar, Independent work

### **Extra information on the teaching methods**

Students are expected to come prepared to the course meetings by reading the texts that will be discussed in class.

The lectures will be recorded, the recordings are open to all students enrolled in the course.

### **Study material**

Type: Reader

Name: Reader en lectuurlijst

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : Dutch

Number of Pages : 120

Available on Ufora : Yes

Available in the Library : Yes

Additional information: the reading list is available in the library; the texts in the reader are in Dutch and English

### **References**

In class, (fragments) of texts will be read by (a.o.) Plato, Aristotle, Shakespeare (Hamlet), Virginia Woolf (On Being Ill, Mrs. Dalloway), Proust (Sur la lecture, A la recherche du temps perdu), Tolstoj (The death of Ivan Iljitsj). -

#### **Course content-related study coaching**

The teacher is available for supervisory sessions.

#### **Assessment moments**

end-of-term and continuous assessment

#### **Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period**

Oral assessment

#### **Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period**

Oral assessment

#### **Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

Participation

#### **Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

examination during the second examination period is possible

#### **Extra information on the examination methods**

Students will make an individual portfolio, based on assignments given in class.

The students are expected to discuss at the occasion of their oral exam a selection of the texts that have been read during the course. The topic of the conversation can be discussed beforehand with the teacher.

#### **Calculation of the examination mark**

30% portfolio and collaboration in class

70% oral exam

#### **Facilities for Working Students**

1. Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance
  2. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
  3. Feedback can be given by email or during an appointment during office hours
- For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy