

TOWARDS THE JUNIOR ESSAY IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

The Junior Essay in Comparative Literature:

The junior essay in Comparative Literature is a fundamental requirement for all concentrators in Comparative Literature. It is the culminating project of junior tutorial*, and in many ways serves as a dry run for the senior thesis writing experience. The junior essay gives students the opportunity to test drive many of the important skills that support the thesis project—proposal writing, scholarly research and citation, close reading and critical argumentation, and draft writing and editing.

Although the topic of the junior essay often provides the basis for the senior thesis project, there is no necessary correlation between the work of the junior essay and the topic of the senior thesis.

The Fine Print:

- The junior essay should be 20-25 pages long (5000-6250 words).
- It should include material from more than one literary culture.
- It may include works from other media.
- It should include relevant secondary material and scholarly apparatus, e.g., footnotes, works cited, appendices as needed.
- A full draft of the essay must be submitted to your junior tutor approximately two weeks before the final deadline.
- The junior essay will be reviewed by two readers who will offer a written evaluation of the work as well as a Latin grade. This grade becomes part of your official departmental docket.

A list of recent junior essay titles and some examples of past junior essays can be found [here](#).

Please consult the [Junior Tutorial Timetable](#) for all relevant deadlines.

The Junior Essay Proposal:

The junior essay proposal is an expansion of the first-semester junior tutorial reflection assignment, which includes a potential research question that looks ahead to the junior essay. The early weeks of the second tutorial semester are designed to give students the chance to refine their anticipated field of interest and junior essay project.

The junior essay proposal, which is due approximately one month into the semester, asks students to re-state and potentially re-define the research question posed in the earlier reflection essay, and to amplify its implications and ramifications. In 350-500 words, you should consider the following questions:

- Why are you asking this particular question? What has prompted your interest in this topic?
- What is at stake in the question at hand and how do you anticipate answering it?
- What primary works will you use as source material? You may use works in other modes and media, and should incorporate material from more than one literary culture.
- How will these works support your investigation and argument?
- What critical works are necessary to your research? Please include an annotated bibliography of 3 relevant works which you have already consulted.

The junior essay proposal should be submitted electronically to the Comp Lit undergraduate office by the deadline indicated on the junior tutorial timetable. It must include your tutor's electronic signature to indicate approval.

Please consult the [Junior Tutorial Timetable](#) for relevant deadlines.

The Junior Essay Workshops:

There is a series of mandatory workshops throughout the junior year designed to support tutorial work, and, in the second semester, to support specifically the development of the junior essay. An early session will be devoted to workshopping the junior essay proposal itself. A subsequent one will be given over to presenting the work in progress for peer discussion and review and will require writing an abstract of the essay which is due in advance of the workshop.

Dates for the tutorial workshops are included on the [Junior Tutorial Timetable](#).