Synopsis of a Proposal for the Initiation of a New Instructional Program Leading to the Minor in Comparative Literature

College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oregon

CIP Designation: 160104

Description of Proposed Program

a. Program Purpose

The objectives of the Comparative Literature Minor would be to enlarge the group of students associated with the Comparative Literature Program and allow students who for various reasons cannot major in Comparative Literature the opportunity to demonstrate their familiarity with and expertise in the discipline.

b. Numbers and characteristics of students to be served

Comparative Literature ordinarily has approximately 35 majors; we would expect there to be approximately 10-15 minors. As Comparative Literature courses are academically demanding, we would expect minors to be as strong as our majors in their academic background. COLT majors frequently are straight-A students with diverse interests and strong independence of mind.

c. Meeting the needs of Oregon, enhancing state’s capacity to respond to challenges and opportunities

Oregonians are well-served by academic settings which foster the ability to come to terms with cultural nuance and which investigate and respect historical and cultural differences among people.

2. Relationship to Strategic Direction

a. How does the proposed program further the mission of the University?

Comparative Literature is among the strongest disciplines in terms of “helping the individual learn to question critically, think logically, communicate clearly;” it helps establish a “framework for lifelong learning;” it demonstrates “a commitment to
international awareness and understanding” as well as “the conviction that freedom of thought and expression is the bedrock principle on which university activity is based.”

b. How does the proposed program maximize student access, academic productivity and institutional quality?

The proposed program broadens opportunities for students who are interested in Comparative Literature among other areas of academic interest; it allows Comparative Literature to reach out to a wider base of undergraduate students and brings more non-majors into courses that specifically value the importance of learning foreign languages, literatures and cultures and developing the skills to think critically and communicate clearly.

3. Resources

a. The Comparative Literature minor depends entirely on courses already being offered, and therefore would not require any new or changed allocations of resources.

b. Comparative Literature is an interdisciplinary program; the major as well as the minor depend upon the cooperation of many departments, such as the English Department, the foreign literature departments, History, Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, and many others.

4. Student Outcomes

a. As we have followed up on recent COLT graduates, we have found that they follow many different career paths, for which their reading, analytical, writing and language skills prepare them very effectively. We have a good record of placing majors into strong graduate programs such as Chicago and Irvine. We believe that COLT minors, who will have similar skills, will be similarly well-equipped for a variety of career paths.

5. Timetable: the completed proposal is ready and has been submitted alongside the synopsis.