Doctor of Philosophy in comparative studies

Program information

College	Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters		
Department or school	Comparative Studies Program		
Degree abbreviation	Ph.D.	**CIP code**	30.2601
Program website	www.fau.edu/artsandletters/comparativestudies/program		

Our commitment to you

This Academic Learning Compact describes the program's mission, what students who complete the program will know and be able to do and how faculty assess that learning. Florida Atlantic University publishes a compact for every degree program and standalone certificate so students, families, employers and the community can see what each program commits to providing its graduates.

Program mission

Comparative studies applies approaches from the humanities, arts and social sciences to the study of significant issues. Doctoral students build expertise in advanced interdisciplinary study that draws on at least two traditional disciplines.

Florida Atlantic University's mission

Florida Atlantic University is recognized as an opportunity university and R1 research institution dedicated to transforming lives through education, discovery, and innovation. We empower students to achieve economic mobility, advance knowledge that creates meaningful impact, and forge partnerships that drive prosperity and connection in the communities we serve.

How the program supports the university mission

The program supports the university's mission by advancing knowledge that creates meaningful impact. Doctoral students produce original, interdisciplinary research and bring advanced writing and analysis skills to academic and public careers.

About the program

Doctoral students explore significant cultural, social and political questions using methods from two or more disciplines. Concentrations include culture, society and politics; cultures, languages and literatures; and design, aesthetics and the arts. The program is a great fit for scholars who want to work across disciplines and write research that others will read and debate.

Student learning outcomes

By graduation, students will be able to demonstrate outcomes in three core areas: content/discipline knowledge and skills (Outcome 1), communication skills (Outcome 2) and critical thinking skills (Outcome 3). Faculty assess all three core outcomes every year.

A. Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills

What graduates will know and be able to do in their field

Areas this program addresses (check at least two)

- ☒ **Declarative knowledge:** key vocabulary, history, theories and concepts of the field
- ☒ **Research skills:** finding, gathering, analyzing and reporting information the way the field does
- ☐ **Technical skills:** hands-on tools and methods of the field, such as software, instruments, lesson plans or business reports

Graduates will be able to explain the major critical schools and traditions in their field and engage them in scholarly debate.
Graduates will be able to conduct original interdisciplinary research that combines established critical reading with innovative methods.

How students show it

The dissertation and the student's scholarly writing, reviewed for knowledge of critical traditions and interdisciplinary methods.

Where it is assessed

Dissertation

B. Communication Skills

How graduates will share ideas and work with others

Areas this program addresses (check at least two)

- ☒ **Written communication:** clear, well-organized writing suited to the audience and purpose
- ☐ **Oral communication:** well-organized presentations that connect with an audience
- ☒ **Other forms of communication:** visual, media, performance or exhibit work
- ☐ **Team/collaborative communication:** contributing to group projects and shared goals

Graduates will be able to write skillful, well-argued scholarship of publishable quality that meets the standards of professional journals and conferences.

How students show it

Scholarly papers written for conferences or journals, and the dissertation.

Where it is assessed

CST 7936; CST 7910 Advanced Research and Study; Dissertation

DAA students may also create an artistic project for their dissertation. (visual, media, performance, or exhibit) accompanied by a written document. DAA students have not yet reached the dissertation stage.

C. Critical Thinking Skills

How graduates will analyze, create and solve problems

Areas this program addresses (check at least one)

- ☒ **Analytical skills:** weighing evidence, comparing ideas and judging arguments
- ☒ **Creative skills:** combining knowledge to create something new, such as a design, performance or proposal
- ☐ **Practical skills:** applying knowledge to real situations, such as a business proposal, lesson plan or grant

Graduates will be able to develop original, perceptive insights through cultural and social or political analysis.
Graduates will be able to create a dissertation, whether analytic, research-based or creative, that makes an original contribution to the field.

How students show it

The dissertation, evaluated for its rigor and original contribution.

Where it is assessed

CST 7936: Interdisciplinary Perspectives; Dissertation

Assessment approaches

Every year, faculty review samples of student work to see how well students are meeting all three outcomes, and they use what they learn to improve the program.

Faculty evaluate each dissertation for its rigor, original contribution, critical thinking and cultural and social analysis. They also review students' scholarly writing for publishable quality and command of critical traditions and interdisciplinary methods.

Assessment methods may change over time.