The Ohio State University Department of Comparative Studies is a multi-disciplinary community of scholars who study how human societies organize themselves through the production of knowledge, discourses and material practices. The department addresses processes of cultural interaction, with particular attention to the dynamics of knowledge, power, authority and cultural difference.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

The faculty in the Department of Comparative Studies are committed to social justice, and energized by critical questions about how justice is to be defined and how it can be realized. Students are encouraged and supported to become effective global citizens, guided by an ethos of mutual respect and persistent questioning, and recognition of the value and pleasures of critical intellectual work.

Promoting the understanding of how culture shapes lives.
PARTNERSHIPS/NETWORKS

One of the central goals of comparative studies, in its long history as a center for interdisciplinary humanities, has been to foster collaboration in research and pedagogy across disciplinary, departmental and college lines. Some of our valued networks include:

INSTITUTE FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HUMANITIES

The institute sponsors programs in public humanities and interdisciplinary research and education for students and faculty.

CENTER FOR FOLKLORE STUDIES

The center supports the learning, teaching, research and public service endeavors of folklorists and students of folklore.

MULTICULTURAL CENTER AND ETHNIC STUDENT SERVICES

The curricular programming in Asian American Studies, Latino/a Studies, and comparative ethnic and American studies in the department holds a mutually supportive relation with the programming and services offered by the Multicultural Center and Ethnic Student Services.

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Learn about comparative studies’ courses that involve study abroad to Egypt, Nicaragua and Cuba.

WEXNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Comparative studies offers The Wexner Center Seminar, a course that addresses current programming at the university’s premier arts presenting venue.

THE RELIGIOUS SOUNDMAP OF THE MIDWEST PROJECT

Assistant Professor Isaac Weiner was awarded $30,000 from Humanities without Walls, a consortium of humanities centers at 15 Midwestern research universities, for his “Religious Soundmap of the Midwest” project. The project will use audio recording and digital mapping technology to study the religious diversity of American cities. Student researchers will produce audio recordings of religious practices across a wide range of local sites.

These recordings will be integrated along with interviews, visual images and explanatory texts onto a publicly accessible, online mapping platform, which will provide a valuable research tool and pedagogical resource for specialists and non-specialists alike. The project is being headed by Weiner and Amy DeRogatis at Michigan State University.

ABOUT COMPARATIVE STUDIES

- Comparative studies encourages critical reflection about culture across boundaries of disciplines, nations and languages
- Scholars attend to the construction of knowledge and the dynamics of power and authority in a range of historical discourses and practices: social, religious, literary, aesthetic, technological, scientific, political and material
- Researchers study how human societies organize themselves through the production of knowledge, discourses and material practices
- Faculty investigate areas such as religion, science, visual culture, folklore, literature, sexuality, race and ethnicity, but our foci and approaches lend themselves to the invention and creation of new objects and fields of interdisciplinary research

“Comparative Studies raises questions that help us understand how culture shapes the lives of individuals and groups.”

(Eugene Holland, professor, Department of Comparative Studies)