

Department of German Studies

Courses - Fall 2022

GRMN0100 Beginning German

A course in the language and cultures of German-speaking countries. Four hours per week plus regular computer and listening comprehension work. At the end of the year, students will be able to communicate successfully about everyday topics. This is the first half of a year-long course whose first semester grade is normally a temporary one. Neither semester may be elected independently without special written permission. The final grade submitted at the end of the course work in GRMN 0200 covers the entire year and is recorded as the final grade for both semesters. Students who have a conflict with the Tuesday hour should contact the instructor.

Mirjam Paninski 501 MWF 9-9:50; Tu 12-12:50

Jasmin Meier 502 MWF 11-11:50, Tu 12-12:50

Jane Sokolosky 503 MWF 12-12:50; Tu 12-12:50

GRMN0300 Intermediate German I

Focuses on deepening students' understanding of modern German culture by reading texts and viewing films pertinent to Germany today. Intended to provide a thorough review of German grammar and help students develop their writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills.

Simon Horn 501 MWF 10-10:50; Th 12-12:50

Ethan Lussky 502 MWF 1-1:50; Th 12-12:50

GRMN0500F 20th Century German Culture

A broad exploration of twentieth-century German culture using many kinds of written and visual texts (e.g. literature, journalism, film, art). While continuing to work on all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing) students will gain more intensive knowledge about German culture, society, and history. In German. Recommended prerequisite: GRMN 0400. WRIT

Christian Obst 501 MWF 11-11:50

Jonathan Fine 502 MWF 9-9:50

GRMN0750H Classics of Crime Fiction

This course will provide an overview of crime fiction from its beginnings in the 19th century to more recent postmodern manifestations of the genre. We will read classic examples of the detective story, golden age and hard-boiled crime fiction, the police procedural, the psychological thriller, the spy novel, and metaphysical crime fiction. In addition to the history of the genre, students will also be introduced to relevant theoretical concepts of reading crime fiction. Reading and Discussions of texts by Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Raymond Chandler, Patricia Highsmith, Eric Ambler, among others. Taught in English.

Thomas Kniesche 501 MWF 10-10:50

GRMN1200H Writing In Exile

Having fled Nazi Germany, Ernst Bloch wrote of fascism: “The masks of the Ku Klux Klan were thus the first fascist uniform.” He was among many diverse writers in exile to be reminded of the political and social formations s/he was seeking to escape, from Bertolt Brecht to Thomas Mann, the erstwhile White House guest and bourgeois advocate of American democracy, who eventually aroused the suspicions of the FBI and came to view in Cold War politics tendencies towards a “fascist dictatorship.” In this course, we will closely read texts that emerged from German exiles with a view to their implications regarding fascism and America. In English.

Kristina Mendicino 501 Tu/Th 10:30-11:50

GRMN1200L Geräuschkulissen/Background Noises

The distinction between noise and voice and speech is porous. This porosity challenges the very definition of human beings who alone, as political beings, according to Aristotle, dispose of articulated speech—lógos-, although sharing voice—phonè—with other animals. The Latin writer Varro holds that children uttering first words do not yet speak; they resemble crows and ravens more than human beings. Their speech borders on sheer noise.

Texts to be read include a section from Aristotle’s History of animals; Echo and Narcissus in Ovid’s Metamorphoses; Poe’s poem The Raven; a chapter from Melville’s Moby Dick; short stories by Kleist, Hebel and Kafka; The Mathematical Theory of Communication by Shannon/Weaver. The seminar opens with two sentences from Clarice Lispector’s novel A hora da estrela: “She was quiet (not having anything to say) but she liked noises. They were life”. — Taught in English..

Thomas Schestag 501 Tu 4-6:30

GRMN1320U Swiss Literature

Many of Switzerland’s most well-known authors (Gottfried Keller, Robert Walser, Annemarie Schwarzenbach, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, etc.) have challenged its dominant political narratives: Switzerland’s neutrality, liberal tradition, natural beauty, and economic prosperity. What makes German-Swiss literature particularly fascinating is its status as a “minor literature,” its linguistic singularity and frequent use of words in dialect and other languages. Swiss literature in German will be the focus of the seminar, but Switzerland’s multilingualism always has been—and continues to be—reflected in its literature. In our seminar discussions we will follow a trajectory from Albrecht von Haller through Keller, Spyri, Zurich Dada, and Walser to postwar and post-millennial authors. Topics include realism, the avant-garde, pedagogy, economy, the politics of dystopia, climate change, and migration. No prior knowledge of Swiss literature is required. Readings and discussions will be in German. Recommended: GRMN0600 or equivalent.

Felix Christen 501 TuTh 1-2:20

GRMN1441J Zwerge und Riesen

According to a famous saying by the Greek sophist Protagoras “Man is the measure of all things”. The so called Man-Measure-Fragment, passed on in Plato’s dialogue Theaetetus, has been the source of countless controversies ever since about the meaning of measure, man, all things, and language. The seminar follows aspects of this controversy in literary and philosophical texts where the perception of “man-as-measure” is taken to the extreme: in the encounter with others as giants or dwarfs. Texts to be read include The Aesop Romance; Jonathan Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels; a chapter from Rousseau’s Essai sur l’origine des langues; Goethe’s novella Die neue Melusine; fairy-tales by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm; a chapter from Nietzsche’s Also sprach Zarathustra; Pär Lagerkvist’s novel Der Zwerg; and a poem by Stefan George: Das Lied des Zwergen. — Taught in German.

Thomas Schestag 501 Tu/Th 9-10:20

GRMN2340E Nietzsche's Poetics

Should Nietzsche's theory of the lyric be understood in both the objective and subjective genitive? In what way and to what extent can the textual genesis of his poems be read as a radically open-ended thought process and engagement with the linguistic and epistemic premises of writing? In the seminar we will first investigate a selection of Nietzsche's early writings on Greek poetry, his genealogy of tragedy, and his analysis of the origin of art, and then turn to a careful study of individual poetic texts. We will address questions of doubling, the "mechanics" of art, friendship and interpretation, skepticism, metaphor, hospitality, and self-analysis in their historical context, and also consider Nietzsche's legacy for current debates on philology, philosophy, and the humanities.

Felix Christen 501 W 3-5:30

GRMN2662K Theories of Survival

Sometimes one unexpectedly lives on. Lyotard once wrote that "survival implies that an entity that is or should be dead is still alive." The idea of survival emerges with special force after traumatic events: global pandemics, genocidal wars, the death of a loved one, personal crises. Yet what if survival were not something added on to life but rather constituted it? Our seminar will test the hypothesis that surviving is the most intense and powerful form of living possible. Readings will be drawn from literature, philosophy, psychoanalysis, and critical theory, including Kafka, Benjamin, Freud, Canetti, Derrida, Lyotard, and Agamben. We will also examine Lear's philosophical case study of radical vulnerability as it emerges in the aftermath of the Crow Nation facing eradication of their way of life, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation*. Diverse graduate fields welcome.

Gerhard Richter 501 M 3-5:30

COURSES IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS THAT MAY COUNT TOWARDS CONCENTRATION

COLT1210 Introduction to the Theory of Literature

Bernsten/Niedermaier

An historical introduction to problems of literary theory from the classical to the postmodern. Issues to be examined include mimesis, rhetoric, hermeneutics, history, psychoanalysis, formalisms and ideological criticism (questions of

race, gender, sexuality, postcolonialism). Primarily for advanced undergraduates. Lectures, discussions; several short papers.

HIST1830B Politics and the Psyche from Sigmund Freud to QAnon

Michael Steinberg

This combined lecture/discussion course explores the relation between politics and the emotions from Sigmund Freud's discovery of the unconscious around 1900 to the explosions of irrational politics in the United States and Europe today. Historical knowledge generally focuses on civilizations, societies, systems, and events as they move, evolve, and transform through time. Psychoanalytic knowledge added the inner, mental (psychic) lives of people and cultures. Psychoanalysis redefined the humanities, the social sciences, and their relationships, paving the way as well for new approaches such as gender and sexuality studies. We will focus on key primary and secondary texts, from Freud's pathbreaking *Interpretation of Dreams* to recent work in European and global history and theory. Topics will include History and Memory; Origins and Structures of Violence; Trauma and the Event; Subjectivity and identity; Mass Psychosis and Conspiracy Theory.

HIST 1974I Central and Eastern Europe and the Trajectory of History

Holly Case

At the center of modern contacts and conflicts between orders (dynastic and revolutionary), empires (Habsburg, German, Russian, Ottoman), ideologies (fascism and communism), and nations, Central and Eastern Europeans have long reflected on the trajectory of history. Many of their ideas have influenced more recent reflections beyond the region on whether the unfolding of history can be best described as cycles, an arc, an apocalyptic dive, entropic attenuation, or mere chaos. We will discuss the experience and ideas of Hegel, Marx, Patočka, Arendt, and others, together with those of more recent groups and individuals—from advocates for racial justice, to environmental activists and theorists, to hackers, programmers, and futurologists, to the alt-right, to Russian thinkers behind Putin's war in Ukraine—who have sought to understand, describe, and influence the course of history.

MES1400 The Middle East in Berlin: Urban Spaces and Voices

Katharina M Galor

This seminar explores the physical and human landscapes of post-war Berlin: its steadily expanding urban fabric and how it engages with the rapidly changing population make-up. The focus will be on the tension between past and present histories, new German identities, the recent massive migrations, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and how these social and geopolitical phenomena interact with the city's urban spaces and monuments. As case studies we will explore the relationship among Germans and three other significant communities: Turks, Israelis, and Palestinians.

MUSC1500A The Genius of Bach

Louis Frederick Jodry

An examination of the life and work of Bach, his vocal, orchestral, keyboard music, including its place in German society, views of his contemporaries and explanation of his performance venues, manuscript and publishing history.

PHIL0531 Marx and Marxism

Charles Larmore

In the first part of the course, we will examine Marx's economic, political, and philosophical writings, focusing on his analysis of capitalism, his critique of liberal democracy, and his theory of history. Then in the second part, we will look at some recent attempts to renew and extend the Marxist tradition.

PHIL1340 Nietzsche

Bernard M Reginster

The course will focus on Nietzsche's famed critique of Christian morality. We will consider a broad range of his writings, but we will pay special attention to the most pivotal and influential of his works, *On the Genealogy of Morality*. We will explore the distinctive approach to the analysis and critique of morality this book offers—in particular, the interaction between morality and affectivity. The course is open to advanced undergraduate students and graduate students. Special weekly discussion sessions will be organized for graduate students taking the course.