

Department of German Studies

Courses – Spring 2022

GRMN0110 Intensive Beginning German

An intensive, double-credit language course that meets five days a week for 9 hours and focuses on speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and the cultures of the German-speaking countries. At the end of the semester, students will be able to communicate successfully about everyday topics relating to the university, jobs, daily life and traveling. Ideal for undergraduate students interested in learning German for study abroad or for concentration requirements and for graduate students interested in starting their foreign language requirements. The course is designed for new students of German, regardless of any previous experience with German.

Jonathan Fine S01 MWF 1-1:50; MWF 2-2:50
Sean Kinnally C01 TuTh 9-10:20
Olivia Howe C02 TuTh 1-2:20

GRMN0200 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 about everyday topics and participate in the annual film festival. This is the second half of a year-long course. Students must have taken GRMN0100 to receive credit for this course. The final grade for this course will become the final grade for GRMN0100.

Simon Horn S01 MWF 9-9:50, Tu 12-12:50
Ethan Lussky S02 MWF 11-11:50, Tu 12-12:50
Jane Sokolosky S03 MWF 12-12:50, Tu 12-12:50

GRMN0400 Intermediate German II

An intermediate German course that stresses improvement of the four language skills. Students read short stories and a novel; screen one film; maintain a blog in German. Topics include German art, history, and literature. Frequent writing assignments. Grammar review as needed. Four hours per week. Recommended prerequisite: GRMN0300. WRIT

Jonathan Fine S01 MWF 10-10:50, Th 12-12:50
Justin Harris S02 MWF 1-1:50, Th 12-12:50

GRMN0600B Was ist Deutsch?

In this course we will examine some of the ideas and myths that became entangled with the emerging notion of a "German" identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some of the terms that we will discuss include 'Kultur,' 'Bildung,' 'Freiheit' and 'Gesellschaft,' all of which have rich semantic histories. **Conducted in German.** WRIT.

Thomas Kniesche S01 MWF 10-10:50

GRMN0750G On the Ego and the Echo

There is more than mere resonance between the first-person singular, "ego," and the word for those "echoes" which may rebound from any number of sources, for self-consciousness would be unconscious of itself without reflection. This dependency of the self upon reflection also implies, however, that the ego could never have simply been one with itself, but remains open at its core to alterity and plurality: to echoes of unknown provenance. This course will pursue the subject(s) of self, speech, and reflection, with readings of theoretical and literary texts from antiquity to the present. FYS.

Kristina Mendicino S01 TuTh 1-2:20pm

GRMN1000A Intro to German Critical Thought – Part I

One of the great intellectual pleasures in our short lives is to engage with the tradition of modern German critical thought. This course introduces all Brown students who do not wish to deprive themselves of this complex pleasure to some of the giants who have prompted us to reconceptualize the way we think about the world and our tenuous place within it, from questions of what we can know to a critique of political economy and the dark side of our sexuality. Authors to be studied include Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. Undergraduates from diverse fields welcome. **In English.**

Gerhard Richter S01 TuTh 10:30-11:50

GRMN1320T /COLT1814I Race in the Age of Reason

What does it mean to say that “race” was invented in the European Enlightenment? How might studying this historical emergence help us to understand race and racism today? We will examine some of the writings that contributed to the construction of race as a philosophical, anthropological, and biological category in the 18th century (including Kant, Herder, Blumenbach, Hume, and the French Encyclopédistes). We will also consider, alongside this primary material, how literature of the period recapitulated but also challenged concepts of race (Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, Kleist’s “Betrothal in Santo Domingo”). **Taught in English**, with all texts available in translation. DIAP.

Zachary Sng S01 MWF 2-2:50

GRMN1441I Insects in Literature

Insects abound in literature; not the least since the comparison of poets with bees in Plato’s *Ion*. This seminar will discuss the *Praying Mantis* in French entomologist’s Jean-Henri Fabre’s writings, in a novel by Maurice Blanchot, and in poems by Paul Celan; *bees* in Jakob von Uexküll and Martin Heidegger, as well as the discovery of a “language” of bees by Karl von Frisch (in 1923); and *flies* in a novella by Gottfried Keller, in a short prose piece by Musil, and in a poem by Heiner Müller. **Taught in English.** Participants from different fields of interest are welcome.

Thomas Schestag S01 MTh 9-10:20

GRMN1900M Weimarer Klassik

“Weimarer Klassik” as an aesthetic project was developed by a group of writers as a response to the revolutionary events at the end of the 18th century. Key questions that were addressed in this project were the role and function of art, the positioning of the subject in modernizing societies, and the resulting challenges and opportunities for literary genres and media. Readings of major works by Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller, with discussion of selected texts by Hebel, Herder, Hölderlin, Kleist, Moritz, and Wieland. **In German.** Prerequisite: GRMN 0600 or permission. Senior Seminar.

Thomas Kniesche S01 MWF 1-1:50

GRMN1900N Crime Scene Germany

Crime scenes—*Tatorte* in German—are locations of past events, reconstructed and (re)staged. The class will provide an idiosyncratic overview of depictions of Germany as a site of *Tatorte*, in literary texts and beyond. In constellations of texts from Droste-Hülshoff to Rainald Goetz as well as in films and photography, we will discuss what it means to encounter (narrated) history in a place where you “can pick up any given stone anywhere and can be certain that something happened at that very place in those dark times...”(Michaela Melián). **In German.**

Nils Plath S01 TuTh 9-10:20

GRMN2662I Metaphor – Anagram

Words are porous things. Among the most prominent efforts to come to terms with their irritating instability are *metaphor* and *anagram*. The seminar will focus on Aristotle's enigmatic definition of *metaphorà* in his *Poetics* (including more recent discussions by Sigmund Freud, Roman Jakobson, and Jacques Derrida); and on Ferdinand de Saussure's anagram studies as presented by Jean Starobinski (in 1971 under the title *Les mots sous les mots* [*Words Upon Words*]), including anagram studies by Tristan Tzara, and anagram poems by Unica Zürn and Oskar Pastior. **Taught in English.** Participants from different fields of interest are welcome.

Thomas Schestag S01 Th 4-6:30

GRMN2662J This is Us in Language: On Mother Tongue, Fatherland, and I

“‘We’ is the battle cry of people who take a single slice of the world and insist that it is the whole world.” (Kristof Schreuf) To show how literature and critical reflections on language can be taken as counter-articulations to authoritative claims wherever one speaks in the name of us/we, this class focuses on various texts, spanning from the 19th century to the present, in which we read about the use of one mother tongue (German), the representation of some fatherland (as a reference or projection plane for identities), and articulations of the I and the collective.

Nils Plath S01 Tu 4-6:30

COURSES IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS THAT MAY COUNT TOWARDS CONCENTRATION

COLT1813Q Literature and Judgment

Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg

There exists a close but complex relationship between the acts of making literature and making judgments. This course will explore some of these relationships and ask, for instance: how does judgment weigh upon the literary act? how do literary considerations bear on our making judgments? what criteria are called forth in both of these moments? Texts treated will be literary, critical-analytical, legal, and cinematic, and include such authors as Arendt, Benjamin, Derrida, Freud, Henry James, Kafka, Kant, Primo Levi, Nietzsche, Tolstoy and Verga.

S01 Th 4-6:30

COLT1814U The Politics of Reading

Peter Szendy

What do we do when we read? And do we even do something, or, as Blanchot suggests, do we rather let be? While being true to Michel de Certeau's plea for a "politics of reading" and an "autonomy of the reader", we will question its binary logic (active vs. passive): 1. by looking closely at the (de)construction of a "sovereign reader" in Hobbes' Leviathan; 2. by analyzing the reading imperative—"Read!"—as it is staged in Plato's and, above all, in Sade's erotics; 3. by taking seriously Walter Benjamin's paradoxical intuition that one should "read what was never written".

S01 Tu/Th 6:40-8

ENGL1901N /COLT1610A The Sublime

Marc Redfield

This course tracks the notion of the sublime from its classical sources through eighteenth-century British and German poetry and philosophy, to twentieth-century theory, with some consideration of the visual arts and other media. Authors to be studied include Longinus, Milton, Burke, Wordsworth, Kant, Hegel, Derrida, Lyotard, Jameson, among others. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

S01 M 3-5:30

MUSC1651 Operatic Sexualities

Michael Steinberg

The two most significant opera composers of the twentieth century are also the heirs of the fin de siècle around 1900: its mix of political crisis and modernist invention and its introduction of the unconscious and sexuality into scientific, artistic, and political debate. From *Tosca* (1900) to *Capriccio* (1942), Giacomo Puccini and Richard Strauss produced a long series of operas whose music and drama set erotic energies against the constraints of real and imagined worlds. We will listen closely and comparatively to select operas in the context of primary texts as well as recent work in opera studies, gender and sexuality studies, psychoanalysis, and political theory.

S01 M 3-5:30

PHIL0993 Political Philosophy: Historical Issues

Paul Guyer

This course will study central issues in the modern history of political philosophy, including the nature of sovereignty, the proper limits and structure of government, the relation between state and religion, and relations among states. Authors will include Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume, Moses Mendelssohn, Immanuel Kant, James Madison, and Wilhelm von Humboldt.

S01 W 3-5:30

