

Department of German Studies

Courses - Spring 2024

GRMNO110 *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*

Jasmin Meier *C01 TuTh 9-10:20*

Justin Harris *C02 TuTh 1-2:20*

GRMNO200 *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.

Kylee Bolinger *S01 MWF 9-9:50, Tu 12-12:50*

Soenke Parpart *S02 MWF 12-12:50, Tu 12-12:50*

GRMNO400 *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*

Christian Obst *S02 MWF 1-1:50, Th 12-12:50*

GRMNO600B *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 TuTh 10:30-11:50*

GRMN1340N Literature and Multilingualism

This course is intended for all Brown students eager to engage in complex pleasure by familiarizing themselves with some of the greatest modern German thinkers and the abiding questions they bring into sharp relief. We will focus on issues of being in the world and the prospect of death; art and politics; language and representation; the relation of capitalism and fascism; and the ambivalent role of technology. Authors to be studied include Heidegger, Bloch, Benjamin, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, and Arendt. When appropriate, we will also ask our German thinkers to speak a little French, as it were, by discovering connections to certain developments in contemporary French thought (Derrida and others). It is not necessary to have taken "Introduction to German Critical Thought I (Kant to Freud)" to enjoy, and benefit from, this course. **In English.** Students from diverse fields welcome.

Zachary Sng *501* *M 3-5:30*

GRMN1340Y *Germans and Jews*

This introductory course will examine the fraught relationship between Germans (and Austrians) and Jews in Germanophone writing across genres from the Enlightenment to the mid- 20th century. We will consider writing by Jewish authors, images of Jews, and the themes of Jewishness and Germanness, emancipation, assimilation, anti-semitism and Zionism. Students will learn analytic reading, writing and research skills. Texts by Lessing, Mendelsohn, Veit, von Arnim, Heine, Marx, Droste-Hülshoff, Lasker-Schüler, Kafka, and Arendt. Readings and discussion in English.

Susan Bernstein *501* *MWF 1-1:50*

GRMN1441M *Thieves in Literature*

The promise to give a word includes, and unavoidably so, the possibility not only to purloin its intended meaning but the word itself. Probably for this reason, Hermes, the messenger god in ancient Greece, not only gives his name for the art of appropriate interpretation, known as hermeneutics, but is also considered the god of thieves. The seminar will follow traces of this other hermeneutics in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, in scenes around theft from St. Augustine's Confessions (theft of pears), and from Rousseau's Confessions (theft of ribbon); in Poe's Purloined Letter; in a series of short prose pieces on thieves by Johann Peter Hebel; and in two poems: Schinderhannes by Apollinaire, and Huhediblu by Celan. The seminar will open by looking at a painting by Bosch (The Conjurer), and end with watching De Sica's film Ladri di Bicicletta..

Thomas Schestag *501* *TuTh 9-10:20*

GRMN1900K Bleibende Irritationen: Henrich Heine und Deutschland

Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) has filled many roles in the history of German culture: a poet who wrote some of the most "Romantic" poems in the German language; an author who effortlessly switched between journalistic and literary writing; and a "wound" (Theodor W. Adorno) that cannot stop refusing to heal. We will conduct extensive readings from Heine's poetic, essayistic, and narrative oeuvre which will result not only in a better understanding of the development of post-classical German literature, but also in a deeper knowledge of German culture as a whole.

In German.

Thomas Kniesche *501* *TuTh 1-2:20*

GRMN2662N *Crises of Verse*

"No word in the poem (I mean here every 'and' or 'the') is identical with the similarly-sounding word of common usage," writes Rainer Maria Rilke in a letter from 1922. Instead, the poetic "constellation" that it enters "changes it through to the kernel of its nature," yielding a "transformation" that Rilke will call both "glorious" and "unheard-of." With these words, Rilke does not merely set poetry apart; he also suggests that poetry deepens and responds to

the Sprachkrise that would become acutely pronounced in Hofmannsthal's "Letter to Lord Chandos," a text which traces a suspension of the rhetoric of judgment concerning everything from affairs of state to everyday encounters. Through readings of Rilke and his contemporaries, we will probe the critical difference their poetry makes for the understanding of language and explore the "unheard-of" implications of their radically non-identical idioms.

Kristina Mendicino 501 W 3-5:30

GRMN26620 Versions of Emptiness

This collaborative humanities seminar will address the question of what we understand by "emptiness." Conversely, we will ask what we mean by "fullness," and how that is conceived of as the opposite of emptiness. Beginning with Lucretius' notion of the void, ending with the free jazz of Ornette Coleman, the seminar will examine a series of philosophical and artistic versions of emptiness (and fullness) as they have played out from ancient/classical to modern/contemporary times. Further examples will include the poetry of Paul Celan, novels by Marguerite Duras, a miniature by Gentile Bellini, and the paintings of Mark Rothko. The constant backdrop to our discussions will be how the passivity or potentiality of blankness is, or is not, transformed into activity or actuality (as well as the ethical and political consequences of that transformation). Students can register for this course under either HMAN 2401W or GRMN 26620.

Thomas Schestag/David Wills 501 Tu 1-3:30

COURSES IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS THAT MAY COUNT TOWARDS CONCENTRATION