German Studies

Assistant Professor of German and Chair: Imke Brust, at Haverford College
Visiting Assistant Professor of German: Simone Schlichting-Artur, at Haverford College
Professor of German and Comparative Literature: Ulrich Schönherr, at Haverford College (on leave)

Professor of German and Comparative Literature and Chair: Azade Seyhan, at Bryn Mawr College
Assistant Professor of German: Qinna Shen, at Bryn Mawr College
Lecturer: David Kenosian, Ph.D., at Bryn Mawr College

I. Introduction

The Department of German draws upon the expertise of the German faculty at both Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges to offer a broadly conceived German Studies program, incorporating a variety of courses and major options. The purpose of the major in German is to lay the foundation for a critical understanding of German culture in its contemporary international context and its larger political, social, and intellectual history. To this end, we encourage a thorough and comparative study of the German language and culture through its linguistic and literary history, institutions, political systems, and arts and sciences.

Course offerings are intended to serve both students with particular interests in German literature and literary theory and criticism and those interested in studying German and German-speaking cultures from the perspective of history, history of ideas, history of art and architecture, history of religion, linguistics, mass media, philosophy, politics, urban anthropology, and folklore.

A thorough knowledge of German is a common goal for both major concentrations. The objective of our language instruction is to teach students communicative skills that would enable them to function effectively in authentic conditions of language use and to speak and write in idiomatic German. Many German majors are encouraged to take courses in interdisciplinary areas, such as Comparative Literature, History, Political Science, Philosophy, Music, and Feminist and Gender Studies.
II. Majoring and minoring in German Studies

The German major consists of ten units to be completed through Haverford College/Bryn Mawr. All courses at the 200 or 300 level count toward the major requirements, either in a literature concentration or in a German Studies concentration.

A. A literature concentration normally follows the sequence 201 and/or 202; 205 or 206, or 214, 215; plus additional courses to complete the ten units, two of them at the 300 level; and finally one semester of Senior Conference.

B. A German Studies major normally includes 223 and/or 224; one 200 and one 300 level course in German literature; three courses (at least one should be a 300 level course) in subjects central to aspects of German culture, history, or politics; and one semester of German 321 (Advanced Topics in German Cultural Studies).

Students majoring in German are encouraged to study at one semester in their junior year in German-speaking countries.

C. A minor in German and German Studies consists of six units of work to be completed through Haverford College/Bryn Mawr. To earn a minor, students are normally required to take German (102) 201 or 202, five additional units covering a reasonable range of study topics, of which at least one unit is at the 300 level. One upper-level course may be chosen with the approval of the department from the recommended electives for German Studies majors.

III. Placement guidelines for future students of German Studies

All first-year students who wish to study German are required to take the placement test prior to enrolling in a German class. All first-year (and sophomore) students will be automatically enrolled in the test and may access it as a course in Moodle. Links are available on the First Year Blog maintained by the Dean's Office. Note: Access to the online placement test will end on Thursday, August 27, at 11:00 am. Students and advisors will be informed about placements by Thursday afternoon. After carefully considering the test results, students will be placed in one of the following categories:

- Elementary German (Germ 001/002)
- Intermediate German (Germ 101/102)
- Advanced German (Germ 201/202)
- Upper Level (any 200- or 300- level course)
IV. Course Offerings 2017-2018:

001, 002. Elementary German (Fall & Spring)

Meets five hours a week with the individual class instructor, one hour with student drill instructor. Strong emphasis on communicative competence both in spoken and written German in a larger cultural context. This is a year-long course; both semesters are required for credit. (Schlichting-Artur, Shen)

101, 102. Intermediate German (Fall & Spring)

Meets three hours a week with the individual class instructor, one hour with student drill instructor. Thorough review of grammar, exercises in composition and conversation. Enforcement of correct grammatical patterns and idiomatic use of language. Study of selected literary and cultural texts and films from German-speaking countries. Two semesters. (Brust, Seyhan)

201/202. Advanced Training: Language, Text, Context (Fall & Spring)

Meets three hours a week with the individual class instructor. This course is intended for students who wish to refine their speaking, writing, and reading skills beyond the intermediate level. Designed as a comprehensive introduction to modern German culture, we will discuss a variety of literary, political, and philosophical texts, including feature films and video materials. In addition, students have the opportunity to enrich the curriculum, by giving class reports on current events of their choice. Weekly grammar reviews will complement these activities. (Shen/Schönberg)

223 Visualizing Nations: Africa and Europe (Fall)

This course explores ideas of nation building in, as well as the transnational relations between Europe and Africa. We will discuss African and European experiences of nation-creation to distinguish between exclusionary and inclusionary visions of nation states. We will investigate the ideas of the nation state in particular from a visual perspective along the lines of race, class, and gender. We will take into account the roles that film, literature, history, economics, and politics play within the formation of nations. Finally, we will contemplate how globalization challenges nation states. (Taught in English with an extra session in German.) (Brust)
305 Modern German Drama – A Moral Compass (Fall)

In 1784 Friedrich Schiller started a discussion about theatre as a moral institution. With this in mind, this course will provide an overview of the historical development of drama within the German-speaking world and also explore foreign influences on German drama. We will read and watch a variety of different plays from Lessing to Jelinek, and engage with different theatrical genres: classical, epic, documentary, absurd, and feminist theatre. In addition, we will discuss the function of the institutionalization of theatre within the German national imaginary, with a particular focus on gender and race. This course is taught in German. (Brust)

321 Topics in German Cultural Studies-German Encounters with East Asia (Fall)

This film course of transnational scope focuses specifically on cultural encounters between the West and the East in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It uses visual material related to East Asia produced mainly by German filmmakers. In present-day Germany, transnational literary and cultural networks constitute a neglected aspect of multicultural discourses and thus deserve more scrutiny. Using film as the main medium, this course touches on issues that are at the center of contemporary cultural debates, such as orientalism, race, gender, class, and identity, as well as postcolonialism, nationalism, travel, exile, translation, multiculturalism, and globalization. (Shen)

209. Introduction to Literary Analysis (Spring)

This course is an introduction to applications and implications of theoretical and aesthetic models for the study of literary texts. (Interim)

263. Visualizing Europa/The European Union (Spring)

The seminar is designed to provide a broad overview of the various aesthetic trends as well as political contexts, which have shaped the contemporary imagination/creation of the European Union. Engaging a variety of different texts, media, and disciplinary perspectives, this course will retrace and engage with the historical development of the idea of Europe from Ancient Greece to contemporary times, and assess the importance of visual representations of this idea in the current era of globalization and mass communication. (Taught in English with an extra session in German.) (Brust)
299 Cultural Diversity and Its Representations (Spring)

This course focuses on representations of “foreignness” in selected German works since the end of the eighteenth century, including works of art, theater, social commentary, journalism, and film. (Shen)

320 Topics in German Literature-Topic (Spring) (Interim)

321. Literature, Film, and New Media: From the Gutenberg-Galaxy to Cyberspace (Spring)

The emergence of new acoustic, visual, and electronic media since the late 19th-century has dramatically changed the status of writing, textuality, and literature. Focusing on modernist as well as contemporary texts, films, and radio plays the seminar will reconstruct the changing intermedial relationship between the book and its technologically advanced ‘other’ from the print-based medium to the latest digital ‘Hypertext’ novel. The challenges posed by photo-graphy, phonography, radio, film, and electronic media prompted writers to rethink and redefine their declining position vis-à-vis the new technologies which have successfully dethroned the book as the primary storage system of modern society. Excerpts from historical and contemporary theories of media (Benjamin, McLuhan, Baudrillard, Kittler, Adorno, Virillo et.al.) will provide the conceptual framework for the analysis of literary and filmic models. (Schönberr)

399. Senior Conference (Interim/Shen)

399. Senior Conference (Schönberr/Brust)

Please direct further questions to
Imke Brust at Haverford College; e-mail: ibrust@haverford.edu
or Azade Seyhan at Bryn Mawr College; e-mail: aseyhan@brynmawr.edu