

## German Studies

Mary Anne O'Neil, *Chair*,  
*Foreign Languages and Literatures*

### *German*

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### *Affiliated Faculty*

Robert Bode	Lynn Sharp
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<i>(on Sabbatical,</i>	Walter Wyman
<i>Fall 2008)</i>	

Thomas Davis  
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*(on Sabbatical, Fall*  
*2008; on Fellowship,*  
*Spring 2009)*

Courses in German studies are designed to develop proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the language and to acquaint the student with German literature and culture.

The courses in foreign literatures in translation (listed in the *World Literature* section), by examining the interrelationships of various national literatures, are designed to give students a broad knowledge of the traditions for foreign literatures from ancient to modern times.

**Placement in language courses:** Students with previous foreign language experience should consult the statement on placement in language courses in the *Foreign Languages and Literatures* section of this catalog.

**The major in German Studies** will consist of 36 credits, including four credits in senior thesis, four credits in German 370 *Advanced Topics in German* and another 12 credits (three courses) in German at the 300 level or above. Of the remaining 16 credits, up to (but no more than) eight may be in German at the 200 level and up to (but no more than) 12 may be in approved German studies courses at the 200 level or above. Additional coursework in German beyond the 300 level may also be applied to the remaining 16 credits. Regularly approved courses in German studies are available in history, music, philosophy, religion, art history and visual culture, and world literature (see

below). Other courses, including those taken abroad, may be accepted as German studies with consent of the tenure-track faculty in German Studies.

Typically, the student entering Whitman with little or no German would include in his or her major: second-year German, third-year German, two German literature courses, two additional courses, either in German literature or in German studies, and a senior thesis.

The student who was able to take third-year German as a first-year student would have more flexibility and would typically take: third-year German, three additional German literature courses, three additional courses either in German literature or in German studies, plus a thesis.

The thesis is written in English, but students must work with texts in the original German. Because these theses are so interdisciplinary in nature, we require an outside reader whose area of academic specialization can enhance the development and assessment of the thesis. The outside reader is not necessarily from the affiliated faculty, but rather the person on the Whitman faculty who has the most expertise in the student's subject matter and is willing to serve.

The Final Comprehensive Exercise consists of the oral defense of the thesis. Prior to the defense of the thesis, students will be asked to prepare presentations on a significant text in German literature and an important scholarly analysis of German culture, chosen by the faculty. During this oral examination, students will also be asked to discuss these texts as well as their own thesis. In the course of the examination, students will need to demonstrate a broad knowledge of German literature, history, and culture.

**The minor in German Studies** will consist of: 12 credits in German at the 300 level or above. At least four credits must be from a course numbered higher than 306 and taken at Whitman College; eight additional credits in German at the 200 level or above or in an approved course in German studies at the 200 level or above; no independent studies count toward the minor. Courses that count for other majors may be used for the minor.

*Note:* Courses taken P-D-F prior to the declaration of a language major or minor will satisfy course and credit requirements for the major or minor. Courses taken P-D-F may not be used to satisfy course and credit requirements for the major or minor after the major or minor has been declared.

Students who major in German studies may choose among the following courses for their required area courses and electives:

Art History 355, *German Visual Culture: 1871-1937*

History 278, *Twentieth Century Europe*

History 339, *Modern Germany*

Music 398, *Music History: Eighteenth Century*

Music 399, *Music History: Nineteenth Century*

Music 400, *Music History and Literature of the Twentieth Century*

Philosophy 304, *Kant and the Nineteenth Century*

Philosophy 309, *Heidegger*

Philosophy 322, *Kant's Moral Philosophy*

Religion 228, *Modern Western Religious Thought I: Crisis and Renewal*

Religion 229, *Modern Western Religious Thought II: The Twentieth Century*

### 105, 106 Elementary German

4, 4

Babilon

Designed to acquaint the student with the sound and the structure of the German idiom, to enable the student to read simple literary materials and to carry on a simple conversation. Four periods per week. Students who have previous work in German are required to take a departmental placement examination for entrance.

### 205 Reading and Speaking

4, x

Staff

Designed for students who wish to improve their reading and speaking knowledge of German. Of prime importance is acquisition of an extensive vocabulary

and familiarity with idiomatic usage. German is used extensively in classroom instruction. Four periods per week. *Prerequisite:* German 106. Students who have not taken German at Whitman previously are required to take a departmental placement examination for entrance.

### 250 Intermediate Topics in German

4

In this course, intensive review of grammar will accompany a focus on a particular topic, such as intellectual history ("Geistesgeschichte"), poetry, songs from classical and popular music, television and new media. Readings and writing assignments will be appropriate for students at the intermediate level, although students who have taken higher level German courses may also take this course. May be repeated for credit, although only eight credits at the 200 level may count for the major or minor in German studies.

### 250A Geistesgeschichte

x, 4

Tobin

The word "Geistesgeschichte" may look like it means "ghost stories," but actually it refers to the "history of the mind," the "history of the spirit," or "intellectual history." In this class, we will focus on short passages from authors such as Luther, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Arendt, Einstein, and Habermas, learning to use the German of the philosophical tradition. Students will develop their abilities to communicate orally and verbally in German. *Prerequisite:* 205 or consent of instructor.

### 300 The Fairy Tale

4; not offered 2008-09

In this course, we will study one of the most appealing and enigmatic literary forms in human history: the fairy tale. Although focused on the German tradition and the tales of the Brothers Grimm, we will strive for a sense of the international and intercultural context of the tales. We will approach the tales from a variety of perspectives — structuralist, historical, sociological, and feminist, among others. In addition to the more traditional folk tales, we will also study some of the art tales written by authors such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Hans Christian Andersen, and Oscar Wilde. All discussion in English. May be elected for credit in German or world literature. Students taking the course for German credit will be expected to read the tales of the Brothers Grimm in German and write written assignments in German; students taking the course for credit in world literature will read and write in English.

### 303 German Film and the Frankfurt School

x, 4

Tobin

In this course, we will review the masterpieces of German-language cinema, beginning with such expressionist works of art as Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, Murnau's *Nosferatu*, Lang's *Metropolis*, and Sagan's *Mädchen in Uniform*. We will

also study Nazi film, particularly Leni Riefenstahl's work. Among the postwar directors that we study will be Fassbinder, Herzog, and Wenders. Queer German filmmakers such as Praunheim and Treut will receive special attention. The course will conclude with recent critical and popular successes such as *Run Lola Run* and *The Lives of Others*. As a critical lens, we will rely heavily on psychoanalytic and Frankfurt School criticism, focusing on writings by Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and Theodor Adorno. In addition to class meetings, a weekly video screening of approximately two hours is required. All discussion in English. Students taking the course for German credit will be expected to watch the films without subtitles and complete written assignments in German; students taking the course for credit in world literature or rhetoric and film studies will generally watch films with subtitles and write in English. May be elected as World Literature or Rhetoric and Film Studies 303.

### **305, 306 Composition and Conversation**

**4, 4** **Babilon**

Emphasizes speaking and writing. Short oral reports, written compositions and review of grammar as necessary. Three periods per week. *Prerequisite:* German 206. Students who have not taken German at Whitman previously are required to take a departmental placement examination for entrance.

### **370 Advanced Topics in German Studies**

**4** Intensive study of a particular topic, theme, or author in German.

### **370 ST: Loving Germans**

**4, x** **Tobin**

In this course, we will analyze discourses of love in the German-language tradition. Moving from the medieval era (*minnesang*) through Storm and Stress (*Sturm und Drang*), Romanticism, the turn of the century into the postwar and contemporary periods, we will attempt to cover literary, religious, philosophical, scientific, psychoanalytic, and pop culture approaches to the question of love. Luther, Goethe, Hoffmann, Freud, Sacher-Masoch, Schnitzler, and Jelinek are among the authors we will read.

### **387, 388 Special Studies**

**4** Designed to permit close study of one or more authors, a movement, or a genre in German literature. Conducted in German or English, at the discretion of the instructor. *Prerequisite:* consent of instructor. The current offerings follow.

### **391, 392 Independent Study**

**1-3, 1-3** **Staff**

Directed reading and preparation of a critical paper or papers on a topic suggested by the student. The project must be approved by the staff. The number of students accepted for the course will depend on

the availability of the staff. *Prerequisite:* consent of instructor.

### **492 Senior Thesis**

**4, 4** **Staff**

In-depth research concluding in the preparation of an undergraduate senior thesis on a specific topic in German literature or German studies. Required of German studies and German literature majors.

### **498 Honors Thesis**

**4, 4** **Staff**

Designed to further independent research or project leading to the preparation of an undergraduate thesis or a project report. Required of and limited to senior honors candidates in German. *Prerequisite:* admission to honors candidacy.