F21
Department of Germanic Languages

GERMAN LITERATURE
&
3000+ LEVEL CLASSES
Explore Berlin from the vantage point of a Columbia German-language classroom! Even if you can't smell Berlin's legendary air, you can gain insight into the city's atmosphere, explore its neighborhoods (Kieze), and gain insights into what's happening now in Berlin and how it emerges from history. What better way to prepare yourself for a visit to the capital city of Germany, for study at Berlin's Freie Universität, or for an internship at one of its institutions?

Advanced German I provides the chance to experience Berlin within a media-supported, communicative-language environment and is a gateway to majoring or concentrating in German at Columbia. Viewings, readings, individual and collaborative assignments, and interactive class activities aim to strengthen both oral and written communication and the ability to engage in critical analysis in German.

(3.0 credits)
This course investigates how the German language has developed over time, focusing on variation in social and regional contexts: What counts as "German"; standardization processes and the efforts of language societies; dialects in Germany and their changes; German varieties outside of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland such as Texas German; and the recent mapping of mixed languages in major German cities.

The course provides an introduction to linguistic transcription and conversation analysis as well as historical linguistic methods. Taught in English; major assignments adjustable for students’ previous knowledge of German or linguistics.

Prerequisite: 2 semesters of any foreign language or equivalent.

Taught in English.

(3.0 credits)
This German-language course for students on the Advanced proficiency level will offer students the opportunity to improve their comprehension of German media language through viewing, reading, writing and digital film production. Course materials will be drawn from German-language periodicals, newspapers, TV newscasts, TV documentaries and features digitally available. Students will hone their media competence by analyzing the material at hand and write, film and edit their own digital newscasts and documentaries in German. Through this process students will acquire the media literacy needed to understand cultural differences in media production and presentation and how to successfully communicate and convey messages in a digital format. Finally, students will familiarize themselves with the technical aspects of filming and will learn how to edit digital material.

The cultural aspect of the course will give students greater insight into current issues and discourses in German-speaking countries and in the U.S. In the final project students apply their skills and findings, after conducting research in German and working with German, Austrian and Swiss cultural institutions, newspapers, companies, cultural centers located in New York. At the end of the semester, students will create and write their own German-language documentary film, edit the documentary and present it to the class and other students of German.

(3.0 credits)
The course is well suited for students who have just completed the second year of German (Intermediate level).

A survey course the impact of examines different forms of displacement and mobility in literary representations and public debates. The focus is on the rich personal and collective experience of migrants. We study stories about exile, asylum, orientalism, expatriation, diaspora, "Gastarbeit", and immigration in German texts written in the 19th and 20th centuries.

You will find out about “imagined communities” in the age of the colonialism and discuss the real or imaginary encounters with India and Africa in the 19th century. Crucial notions such as asylum and cosmopolitanism will inform our discussions, including the facets of race- and gender-based perspectives. Readings include works by major German writers and intellectuals such as Anna Seghers, Emine Özdamar, Bertolt Brecht and Hans Magnus Enzensberger, transnational poets like Chamisso and influential studies such as Saskia Sassen’s Guests and Aliens.

(3.0 credits)
This course explores fascism through a comparative, trans-historical, and interdisciplinary lens. Beginning with Germany’s Third Reich, we will examine fascism’s history and foundations in social, political, religious, and scientific developments. We will explore various theories—ranging from psychoanalytic to philosophical—which try to explain the rise and spread of fascism in Germany as well as Italy and Japan. To help conceptualize fascism, we will analyze its complex relationship with race, ideology, and nationalism, and in particular, its deployment of technology, aesthetics, and propaganda. We will apply our own working definition of fascism to the contemporary moment by analyzing current populist, authoritarian movements around the globe.

Taught in English.

(3.0 credits)
This course introduces students to important genres and periods of German literary history. Our emphasis will be on close reading and formal analysis of literary texts, especially of shorter genres such as parable, fable, anecdote, fairy tale, and short story. Authors analyzed include Goethe, Lessing, Kleist, Kafka, Ingeborg Bachmann, Brentano, Heine, Marx, and others.

Taught in German.

(3.0 credits)
This course examines modernist literature, art, and music in the early twentieth century. In close readings, students will focus on the essential works from this period and learn to situate them in their historical contexts and the urban settings in which they were conceived: Munich, Prague, Vienna, and Berlin. The analysis of modernist works will be framed with introductions to questions of language, gender and sexuality, anti-Semitism, and the emergence of fascism.

Authors include Arthur Schnitzler, Frank Wedekind, Robert Musil, Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Irmgard Keun, Bertolt Brecht, Alfred Döblin, and Walter Benjamin; musical works by Berg, Schoenberg, and Weill.

The course is taught in German.

(3.0 credits)
This course studies how Thomas Mann’s *Magic Mountain* explores, through its narration of disease, the intricate relationship between ethical concepts and moral norms, between bodily sensation and psychic dispositions, between metaphysical concepts and medical insight and innovation (the discovery of the x-ray and psychoanalytic treatment, for example), and between the institution of the tuberculosis sanatorium and its morbid and potentially rebellious inhabitants.

*(3.0 Credits)*
The German Pedagogy Seminar is open to graduate students of all languages who are or will be teaching for their departments. The course will be taught in English.

What kind of teacher would you like to become? What experience, knowledge, and opinions regarding learning and teaching a language and language and communication do you bring to class? How can theoretical and practical literature in the field of Foreign Language Teaching help us augment our personal experiences? How do we plan and execute lesson plans? What role do institutional expectations play? What can we learn from how others teach? How can we ensure to welcome a wide spectrum of students into our classes? What impact has the pandemic had on the way we approach learning and teaching? How can we grow as educators through self-reflection, our interactions with colleagues, and through our understanding of theoretical and practical knowledge that goes beyond planning the next class?

Collaboratively, we will discuss these and other questions using our concrete experience, practical and theoretical literature, and opportunities for professional development. We will apply our knowledge and create materials together, visit colleagues in other language classes and reflect on our learning and teaching experience.

*Taught in English.*

*(3.0 credits)*
This course offers an introduction to German intellectual history by focusing on the key texts from the 18th and 19th century concerned with the philosophy of art and the philosophy of history. Instead of providing a general survey, this thematic focus that isolates the relatively new philosophical subspecialties allows for a careful tracing of a number of key problematics. The texts chosen for discussion in many cases are engaged in lively exchanges and controversies. For instance, Winckelmann provides an entry into the debate on the ancients versus the moderns by making a claim for both the historical, cultural specificity of a particular kind of art, and by advertising the art of Greek antiquity as a model to be imitated by the modern artist. Lessing’s *Laocoön* counters Winckelmann’s idealizing approach to Greek art with a media specific reflection. According to Lessing, the fact that the *Laocoön* priest from the classical sculpture doesn’t scream has nothing to do with the nobility of the Greek soul but all with the fact that a screaming mouth hewn in stone would be ugly. Herder’s piece on sculpture offers yet another take on this debate, one that refines and radicalizes an aesthetics based on the careful examination of the different senses, especially touch and feeling versus sight.

The second set of texts in this class deals with key enlightenment concepts of a philosophical anthropology informing the then emerging philosophy of history. Two literary texts will serve to mark key epochal units: Goethe’s *Prometheus*, which will be used in the introductory meeting, will be examined in view of its basic humanist program, Kleist’s *The Earthquake in Chile* will serve as a base for the discussion of what would be considered the end of the Enlightenment: be that the collapse of a belief in progress or the critique of the beautiful and the sublime. The last unit of the class focuses on Hegel’s sweeping supra-individualist approach to the philosophy of history and Nietzsche’s fierce critique of Hegel. Readings are apportioned such that students can be expected to fully familiarize themselves with the arguments of these texts and inhabit them.

*Taught in English.*

(3.0 Credits)
The class, which is open to advanced undergraduate and graduate students, will explore silent and early sound films from the period of the Weimar Republic. Close analysis of films such as The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Nosferatu, Metropolis, M, Dr. Mabuse, The Blue Angel and others will be combined with a historicist exploration of the cinematic medium in the 1910s and 1920s. Specific topics of discussion include anxieties about the hypnotic power of the moving image, shell shock, spirit photography, the "New Woman," the mass ornament.

All readings and class discussions are in English and all films have English sub- or intertitles.

(3.0 credits)
Not just since yesterday, the visual media have turned literature into a historical medium. We watch movies, play video games and read on tablets—if we read at all. Therefore, this class takes the opportunity to think about what is so specific about literature, since the literary text is not just a text, but an aesthetic medium. The theoretical readings and practical analyses aim at developing the theoretical basis for an “art of the text.” Each text starts at its very beginning: on paper or on a desktop, and it ends with images, emotions, and voices that a literary text can evoke. This journey leads to the rhetorical “common places” (topoi), that since antiquity have been used to map out the literary text—and the special way it creates worlds. Along the way, this class will provide a thorough outlook over classical rhetoric and literary aesthetic as well as modern and post-modern literary theory.

*Taught in English.*

*(4.0 Credits)*