

KALAMAZOO COLLEGE
2018-2019 ACADEMIC CATALOG

German Studies

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In studying foreign languages, students acquire not only a linguistic skill but also an understanding of other peoples' literatures, histories, and cultures. They gain a new perspective from which to view their own country, way of life, and language. Knowledge of a second language is an important facet of the liberal arts program. Proficiency in a second language at the 201 level is a graduation requirement.

German courses at all levels emphasize speaking, reading, writing, and listening while addressing topics related to German culture. The disciplinary basis for the program, German Studies, draws on literature, history, gender studies, popular culture, music, architecture, and film (among other things) to aid students in the development of a critical understanding of the German-speaking world and their own. The German Studies curriculum uses a genre- and literacy-based approach to foreign language learning that is dedicated to integrating linguistic knowledge, cultural learning and textual analysis throughout the four-year major curriculum, top to bottom. For example, through genre-focused courses such as those on film and contemporary German culture, the German program recognizes the importance of new media in the 20th and 21st centuries and how these media have reshaped the nature of German culture. Other advanced courses take a wider historical view, examining the changing nature of German culture through the lens of a particular genre (such as film) or theme (such as minority cultures).

Most Kalamazoo College students participate in the study abroad program; for students interested in German, there are opportunities in Erlangen and Bonn. Course work and off-campus experiences are complemented by on-campus opportunities that maintain or improve a student's language skills, including conversation groups led by native speaking teaching assistants and a quarterly film series.

Faculty members meet students inside and outside the classroom, participate in campus activities, and counsel students regarding career choices in foreign service, education, publishing, international business, and other fields. A number of German majors, as well as students in the German program, have been able to participate in Career and Professional Development internships with German companies, both in the United States and in Europe.

As part of the study abroad program at Kalamazoo College, scholarships for one year of further study at the German universities of Bonn and Erlangen are available to qualified graduates of the College. Kalamazoo students have often succeeded in obtaining Fulbright fellowships and other support for further study in Germany. Competition for these scholarships is not limited to German majors.

Placement

All incoming students who have previously studied German in high school or elsewhere must take the College's placement test in German.

Students with three or more years of high school German will not be placed into GERM 101. Those students who wish to receive credit for German courses that they have taken at another college or university before enrolling at Kalamazoo College must take the German language placement test and test into a higher-level course than the one for which they are seeking credit. Any appeal of the placement test results should be directed to a faculty member in the Department of German Studies.

Advanced Placement

For students with an advanced placement (AP) score of 4 or 5, credit toward the B.A. degree will be awarded automatically upon admission. Study must begin with GERM 203 or above to receive credit in German at Kalamazoo College. Students with AP scores of 3 may be granted the waiver of a prerequisite, but may not count an AP 3 for credit.

Requirements for the Major in German

Number of Units

Eight units are required, not including GERM 101 and 102 (the eight may include the SIP), plus one cognate course in German or European studies from the list below. No more than two of these units may be earned during study abroad.

Required Courses

GERM 203 Advanced German I: Germany Today
GERM 204 Advanced German II: German Stories and Histories
GERM 301 Introduction to German Cultural Studies: Reading Texts and Contexts
GERM 470 Contemporary German Culture
GERM 490 Senior Seminar

Also required: Passing a German language proficiency test, either the Goethe-Zertifikat B1, B2 or C1 (as recommended by the department). The exams are designed by the Goethe Institute and offered on campus during spring quarter.

Electives

Three courses above 201, two of which must be at the 400-level

German and European Studies Cognate

(One course required; does not count toward required 8 units)

ARTX 140, 145, 150 Introduction to History of Art I/II/III
HIST 101, 102 Introduction to Europe I/II
HIST 246 Germany and Central Europe in the 19th Century
HIST 247 History of Germany and Central Europe: 1890-Present
HIST 250 Revolution, Industry, Imperialism: Europe in the 19th Century
HIST 255 Contemporary Europe
HIST/RELG 263 Modern Jews in Enlightenment and Revolution
HIST/RELG 264 Modern Jewry: Upheaval and Response
MUSC 330 Western Music in the Classic and Romantic Eras
PHIL 207 18th Century Philosophy
PHIL 208 19th Century Philosophy
PHIL 307 Contemporary Continental Philosophy
POLS 210 Comparative Political Institutions: Social Europe
POLS 270 The European Union
POLS 330 The Politics of the Holocaust
THEA 270 The Theatre of Illusionism: Western Theatre from the Renaissance to Early Film

All of the 400-level German courses count toward the Cultures requirement (Europe) for graduation and toward the literature Area of Study requirement for graduation.

Students considering a major in German are urged to begin their study of German in their first year. German majors are encouraged to take courses in appropriate cognate areas such as history, political science, economics, art history, international and area studies, and international commerce, and are strongly urged to study abroad in a German-speaking country.

Requirements for the Minor in German

Number of Units

Six units are required, not including GERM 101 and 102.

Required Courses

GERM 201 Intermediate German
GERM 203 or 204 Advanced German I or II
GERM 301 Introduction to German Cultural Studies: Reading Texts and Contexts
GERM 470 Contemporary German Culture

Electives

Two 400-level German Studies courses above 201.

German Studies courses

GERM 101 Beginning German I: The Personal World

An introduction to the German language with an emphasis on the personal world. Through communicative activities covering the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), students learn to ask and answer questions and share information about themselves, their families, and their daily activities.

GERM 102 Beginning German II: The German-Speaking World

Expansion of the skills acquired in GERM 101. Students build on their basic knowledge of everyday German-speaking culture (through topics such as tourism and transportation, health care, and leisure activities), improve their communicative competence, and develop skills needed to negotiate a variety of cultural settings.

GERM 200 Myth of a Nation: German Film

One of the most revealing ways to explore the complexities of German history and the construction of national identity in the 20th and 21st centuries is through film. This course examines German cinema as a reflection of one of the most dynamic, if problematic, nations in the modern world. Along with a basic understanding of the terms used in the formal description of film, this course provides students with the socio-historic background to be able to evaluate the role that films played in shaping and reflecting German cultural ideals from the early 20th century through the present. In English.

GERM 201 Intermediate German: Topics in German Culture

Continued expansion of the skills acquired in GERM 101 and 102. Students further develop their ability to communicate in German and their understanding of the German-speaking world by engaging with increasingly complex topics (such as education, environmental issues, politics, history, and multiculturalism). As in German 101 and 102, all four language skills are practiced, and comparisons between American and German society provide the basis for class discussions.

Prerequisite: GERM-102

GERM 202/SEM 241 Reading European Cities: Istanbul, Vienna, Berlin

This course addresses the questions of how we may understand a culture by learning to "read" its cities. Texts range from maps, histories, architecture, theories of urbanism and urban ecology, to films, documentaries, memoirs, and music - an array of genres that highlights the status of the modern city as both a physical place and an imaginary construct. The broad aim of course is to provide students with conceptual tools for "reading" a city as well as a new culture critically, and thus to facilitate their intercultural competency. Berlin, Vienna, and Istanbul will serve as case studies for the practice of interpreting urban narratives, and the course will culminate with student research projects and presentations on the cities in which they plan to study abroad, or a city of their choice. In English. This course is a Shared Passages Sophomore Seminar.

GERM 203 Advanced German I: Germany Today

This course centers around themes related to life in contemporary Germany, with special emphasis on developing students' writing skills in various genres. In a unit on current events in Germany, for example, students read and listen to news reports, practice vocabulary items and linguistic structures typical of journalistic texts, and finally compose (in multiple drafts) a newspaper article on a topic of their choice. In German. May be taken after German 204.

Prerequisite: GERM-201

GERM 204 Advanced German II: German Stories and Histories

This course centers around children's and youth novels presented within the historical and cultural context of 20th century Germany, with special emphasis on developing students' reading skills and cultural literacy. Continued practice of linguistic structures and systematic vocabulary building are also central to the course. In German. May be taken before German 203.

Prerequisite: GERM-201

GERM 301 Introduction to German Cultural Studies: Reading Texts in Contexts

This course serves as an introduction to upper-level courses in German Cultural Studies. It stresses the central role that culture plays in fostering an understanding of German society, and it introduces students to the tools and theories of cultural analysis. Readings and genres range from literature and film to documentaries, magazine articles, blogs, cartoons, and music, and they may be focused on a single theme across a number of time periods to provide a context toward an understanding of how a particular text reflects cultural identities. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-203 or GERM-204

GERM 410 German Songs and Sagas, Folk and Fairy Tales

This course examines common structural and thematic elements in German epic and lyric poetry, folk and fairy tales from the Middle Ages to the Second World War. The first half of the course will be devoted primarily to a key text in the history of German literature, the medieval epic *Das Nibelungenlied*. After reading the text closely (in modern German translation),

students will study the reception of the Nibelungenlied in 19th and early 20th century German culture (through Wagner's opera and Fritz Lang's film) and its importance for burgeoning German nationalism. In the second half of the course, students will trace key themes from the Nibelungenlied--love and loss, honor and war, and the nature of the heroine and hero/warrior--in folk and fairy tales and in lyric poetry from the Enlightenment to the 20th century. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 411 Writing One's Life and Times: Autobiography and Personal Writing in Germany

In this course, students will engage with a variety of texts written in German in the 20th century that fall into the genre of person writing (autobiographies, journals, and letters). Readings will center around three themes: defining an artistic identity in the modern age, living through times of crisis, and women's struggle for social recognition and a public voice. Students will gain a critical understanding of the many and varied ways in which individuals use personal texts to communicate with others, to define identity, to call for social change, and to come to terms with the world in which they live. Student responses to the texts under study will take the form of informal discussions, discussion leadership, oral presentations, and formal essays, and they will also author their own short autobiographical texts and journals or web logs. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 412 German Drama Workshop

The essence of drama lies in its performance. Despite the fact that dramas have often been written that were never performed during the lifetimes of their authors (sometimes quite intentionally so), most dramas only blossom into their full range of meaning when realized upon the stage by actors. It is also true that in order to gain a deep understanding of the internal mechanics of the drama, and an appreciation for the craft of the playwright, it is invaluable to take part in the production of the play in question. Here one sees the play "from the inside," a radically different perspective than that afforded by the comfortable seat in the audience or the library. In this course students will play the parts of both actor and director with a view to gaining access to these deeper levels of understanding found within a selection of German dramas. Following collective reading and discussion of the dramas, each course participant will have the chance to act or direct a scene for him/herself. A critical element of this course will be discussion of the cultural contexts in which each drama was originally written and performed, including comparative acting techniques and what these tell us about the epoch of German culture in which they emerged. Taught in German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 420 Introduction to German Cinema

This course will offer an overview of German cinema through the analysis of nine films from the Weimar Republic through the post-Wende period. We will screen and discuss films from a wide variety of periods of German cinematic history during this course: the Weimar Era, the Third Reich, Postwar Cinema, New German Cinema, East German or DEFA Cinema, Women's Cinema, and post-Wende cinema. Our primary focus in this course will be on learning the basics of film language and analysis; developing skill in close textual reading of film through sequence analysis; and understanding the film both as art and as cultural artifact within its historical (and film historical) contexts. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 421 Classic German Cinema of the 1920s and 30s

This course seeks to acquaint its participants with the rich world of Weimar-era German culture, and specifically with the vibrant production of films during the 1920s and 30s. The German film industry was the only significant challenger to Hollywood's domination of the big screen during this era, and it crafted its own distinctive style with directors and performers whose accomplishments served as cinematic milestones for world cinema. A second, but not less important, goal of this course is to instill the vocabulary and analytical skills necessary to read and comprehend filmic texts that both filter and reflect the cultures and historical periods in which they emerged. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 423 Topics in German Cinema

This addresses a variety of topics (on a rotating basis) related to German cinema. These may include "The Films of Fritz Lang," "East German Cinema," and "Women in German Cinema." An important goal of the course is to instill the vocabulary and analytical skills necessary to read and comprehend filmic texts that both filter and reflect the cultures and historical periods in which they emerged. May be repeated for credit (consult with the department). In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 430/GERM 490 Themes in German Literature and Culture

This course examines the changing nature of German culture through a variety of texts (ranging from literature, history, and popular culture to music, architecture, and film) on a particular theme. Possible themes for the course include "German-Jewish Literature and Culture," "Germany Imagines Itself: Culture and Identity in the 18th and 19th Centuries," and "Reading Berlin." May be repeated for credit (consult with the department). In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 430 The Nature of the Book

This course examines the nature of the book from two perspectives. The first focuses on how depictions of nature have evolved since Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's catalogization of plants. The second focuses on the importance of materiality to the construction of a book. These two perspectives collide in texts by contemporary author Judith Schalansky, who incorporates images of natural history in her novels. Schalansky also edits a tactile series on natural history. Thus this course will consider the evolution of the book and book printing culture through select engagement with the book as nature and the book as material good. Central questions under consideration are the intersection of form and genre and the relationship between content and materiality. Course materials include: illuminated manuscripts, catalogues on natural history, writings by early natural scientists, graphic novels, and e-books. Students will acquire and practice specialized vocabulary and review relevant grammatical structures. In German.

Prerequisite: Take GERM-301

GERM 435 Minority Cultures in Germany

This course focuses on Germany as a multicultural society and on related popular cultural discourse. It explores issues surrounding immigration in Germany since 1960, focusing on the period after 1990. It examines various cultural practices as staged in film, fiction, blogs, political articles, Hip Hop, television (documentaries, talk shows, sitcoms), with an emphasis on the constructions of ethnicity, nation, race, class, and gender. We analyze several political and cultural debates that dominated the media in Germany and Europe at large (e.g. the headscarf and integration debates), and read theoretical articles examining the relationship between immigration, culture, and identity. In German.

Prerequisite: Take GERM-301

GERM 470 Contemporary German Culture

This course examines a selection of topics, themes, and issues that are part of the contemporary German cultural and political landscape. These include relations between east and west Germans, efforts to reform German higher education, social challenges posed by Germany's aging populace, German immigration laws, ongoing efforts to come to terms with the history of National Socialism, and the influence of the United States on German popular culture. Students will work with a wide variety of texts that range from autobiographical and fictional works (novels and short stories), to films, film reviews, music, on-line newspaper articles, government press releases, surveys, and political cartoons. Students will acquire and practice sophisticated vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse markers that will allow them to comprehend and discuss these texts. Student responses will take the form of informal conversations, prepared debates, formal presentations, discussion leadership, and written essays in various genres. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301

GERM 490/GERM 430 Senior Seminar

Offered annually in conjunction with GERM 430, this course examines the changing nature of German culture through a variety of texts on a particular theme. Senior German majors will complete a research project related to the subject of the course and will present their work in a public forum. In German.

Prerequisite: GERM-301 and Senior Standing

GERM 593 Senior Individualized Project

Each program or department sets its own requirements for Senior Individualized Projects done in that department, including the range of acceptable projects, the required background of students doing projects, the format of the SIP, and the expected scope and depth of projects. See the Kalamazoo Curriculum -> Curriculum Details and Policies section of the Academic Catalog for more details.

Prerequisite: Permission of department and SIP supervisor required.

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