

GERMAN STUDIES (GERM)

Updated January 30, 2024

Chair of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures: Associate Professor S. Cook
Instructor III: K. Lovrien-Meuwese

DEGREES/PROGRAMS OFFERED

3-Year BA
Minor

INTRODUCTION

The modern German language was born in the 16th century when two groups of dialects known as Frankish and Alemannic merged into a single language. As a result of the wide circulation of Martin Luther's German translation of the Bible (1534), the new language quickly grew in influence and prestige.

First taught as a language of culture, German was the mother tongue of many brilliant writers such as Goethe, Schiller, Kafka, Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht and Günter Grass and many well-known composers such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Wagner and Mahler. From the 18th century onwards, German has been at the forefront of intellectual inquiry, German-speaking intellectuals having shaped the Humanities with philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche and Heidegger, political thinkers such as Marx, Engels, Nietzsche and Hannah Arendt, psychoanalysts such as Freud and Jung and philologists (linguists) such as Humboldt, Schlegel, Schleicher and Grimm.

German is key to understanding the complexities of 20th century European history, culture and identity, given Germany's role in World Wars I and II, the Holocaust, the Cold War, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the evolution of the European Union (EU) following the reunification of East and West Germany. Now spoken by over 100 million people in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, German has more native speakers than any other European language in the European Union, and is second only to English as the language of business within the European Union.

Here in C tUn C t 36 Modern German and Cultures, you will explore the German language and culture in the 20th century. This course is designed for students with challenging courses where you will discuss topics of current interest, reflect on problems of the modern world, explore the culture of Germany, Austria and Switzerland and read short texts dealing with the social and political issues of our time. As you develop your command of oral and written German, you will also develop the cultural understanding that is needed in the global community.

Each year, UW students have the opportunity to take part in our exchange program with the University of Bamberg in Germany. If you are interested, contact the German Studies facilitator for further information.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A 3-YEAR BA IN GERMAN STUDIES

ADMISSION REQUIREMENT

Students must consult with the Department advisor

Combined Major:

Minimum 48 credit hours from two (2)