

THE FIELD

GERMAN STUDIES

Our undergraduate program in German studies offers a broad range of courses on the German-speaking world from the Middle Ages to the present. In addition to our language courses, from beginning to advanced German, we teach classes on culture, society, film, literature, history, politics, and philosophy in both German and English. We offer two concentrations for the German major: German studies and STEM-German.

Our German-language courses focus on the continuous development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. While improving their German language proficiency, students will also develop their ability to understand, articulate, and examine cultural, historical, and political issues in the German-speaking world through engagement with a wide variety of literary texts and media, including film, art, and music. STEM-German language courses prepare students to participate in scientific and technological research and industry in Germany. We provide tools for critical inquiry and foster intercultural competence by establishing understanding of and ability to navigate inter- and intracultural differences.

Our strengths are in interdisciplinary literary and cultural studies. This is reflected in our regularly taught courses on witches and myths, folk tales, crime and criminals, the Holocaust, the Crusades and images of Islam, Berlin, refugee comics, East German films, turn-of-the-century Vienna, the quest for the grail, Yiddish and German-Jewish culture, and star culture and actresses. In these courses, students learn to engage critically with the course materials, to interpret cultural texts within their historic and socio-political contexts, to develop analytical reading and writing skills, and to effectively communicate, discuss, and exchange their ideas.

A minor in German studies is available.

JOINT MAJOR IN GERMAN AND LINGUISTICS

Students may elect an interdisciplinary major in German and linguistics offered by the linguistics department. Requirements include the successful completion of four courses (12 credits) in German (110, 120, 230, and 240, or equivalent) and 31 credits distributed between linguistics and German.

HONORS

Students may pursue honors opportunities within the major. Contact the honors coordinator, Professor Robert Sullivan (sullivan@german.umass.edu) for more information.

STUDY ABROAD

We strongly encourage our majors and minors to spend a semester or a year studying abroad in Germany. The University of Massachusetts has long-standing partner agreements with all nine research universities in the German state of Baden-Württemberg. Our students consistently tell us that their study abroad is one of the most important experiences of their lives.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Our graduates have gone on to positions in teaching, the State Department, finance and other business-related fields, computer science, public relations, publishing, translation and interpreting, journalism, international communications, engineering, museums, radio and TV, and to pursue graduate study in the U.S. and abroad.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS

The humanities focus on human creativity, endeavor, and culture. The imaginative and creative arts—literary and performing—derive from life and teach about human behavior and constructs of social reality. The history of social, political, and economic systems illuminates and shapes the present and future. Students in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts are expected to broaden their perspectives on individual and cultural expression within their own and other societies, to understand the development and evolution of the discipline of study in relation to the culture from which it emanates, and to learn the methods by which knowledge in the discipline is gained.

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