Germanic Languages and Literatures

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures offers a comprehensive program in the language, literature, and culture — past and present — of Germany and German-speaking countries. Our faculty (http://german.wustl.edu/people) pursue a multiplicity of approaches in their research and offer seminars (http://german.wustl.edu/courses/archive) that provide a healthy balance of theory and the history of German literature and culture. The department offers numerous opportunities for interdisciplinary study (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/interdisciplinary-study), including a one-of-a-kind joint PhD program with Comparative Literature (http://bulletin.wustl.edu/prior/2017-18/grad/gsas/complit) and an innovative certificate program that gives students the option of developing an expertise in one of five associated fields.

Both faculty and students teach and do research in a wide range of related disciplines, including art history; comparative literature; digital humanities; European studies; film and media studies; Jewish studies; Medieval and Renaissance studies; religious studies; and women, gender, and sexuality studies.

We consider international exchange to be a crucial component of graduate education. We maintain an exchange agreement on all levels (faculty, graduate, undergraduate) with the University of Tübingen, in addition to graduate student exchanges with the universities of Berlin, Cologne, and Munich. These arrangements enable us to guarantee a year abroad for all of our PhD candidates. At the same time, they enrich our program by bringing German exchange students to campus to study and teach alongside the full-time students in our program. Exchange is further facilitated by the Max Kade Center (http://german.wustl.edu/max-kade-center), which, in addition to numerous other activities, plays host each spring to a writer- and critic-in-residence. The department also invites a distinguished visiting professor (http://german.wustl.edu/people/visiting-scholars) to campus every other year.

Departmental faculty are known across campus and across the discipline for their close mentoring of graduate students, who are integrated into the department through their participation in numerous activities, from the graduate student symposium (http://german.wustl.edu/events/graduate-symposium) and the department’s biennial international symposium (http://german.wustl.edu/events/biennial) to outreach programs like German Day (http://german.wustl.edu/events/german-day).

We also give close attention to teacher development (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/teaching) through our unique pedagogy internships, through recurring workshops, and through a classroom mentoring program that ensures that all assistants in instruction receive feedback and advice from a large number of faculty members. Graduate students have the opportunity to teach in our undergraduate German program at all levels, in both German and English, and many also have a chance to teach courses or sections in other programs.

The combination of our extremely competitive funding (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/funding) packages and the low cost of living in St. Louis (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/area) ensures that students have the resources they need to stay focused on their academic work. As a consequence, our graduate students (http://german.wustl.edu/people/graduate-students) not only produce first-rate dissertations (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/recent-dissertations), they also go on to accept positions (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/placement) at top research universities and liberal arts colleges across the country.

Their success is facilitated by the outstanding research collections available at the Washington University library (http://library.wustl.edu), including the Collection of Contemporary German Literature (http://libguides.wustl.edu/contemporarygermanliteraturecollection), as well as the Suhrkamp/Insel Collection (http://library.wustl.edu/collections/#suhr). Other resources include the Gottand Collection (18th to 20th centuries) in the Rare Book Collection of Olin Library, the internationally famous Reformation Collection at Concordia Seminary, and the Vatican Manuscript Collection at St. Louis University. The Saint Louis Art Museum (http://www.slam.org) and the Washington University Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum (http://kemperartmuseum.wustl.edu) have extensive holdings in German expressionist and contemporary art.

For questions about the graduate application process (http://german.wustl.edu/graduate/admission) or to request a brochure, please contact our Student Coordinator, Cecily Stewart Hawksworth (https://german.wustl.edu/people/hawksworth_cecily), or our director of graduate studies, Professor Erin McGlothlin (https://german.wustl.edu/people/mcglotlin_erin).

Contact: Prof. Erin McGlothlin or Cecily Stewart Hawksworth
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Email: mcglotlin@wustl.edu; cecilyhawksworth@wustl.edu (mcglotlin@wustl.edu; cecilyhawksworth@wustl.edu)
Website: http://german.wustl.edu/graduate

Faculty Chair

Matt Erlin (http://german.wustl.edu/people/erlin_matt)
Professor of German
PhD, University of California, Berkeley
18th- & 19th-century German literature; intellectual history; digital humanities; material culture
Endowed Professors

Paul Michael Lützeler (http://german.wustl.edu/people/paul-michael-lutzeler)
Rosa May Distinguished University Professor in the Humanities
Director of the Max Kade Center
PhD, Indiana University
Contemporary and exile literature; Romanticism; literary discourses on Europe

Lynne Tatlock (http://german.wustl.edu/people/tatlock_lynne)
Director, Comparative Literature
Hortense and Tobias Lewin Distinguished Professor in the Humanities
PhD, Indiana University
17th-, 19th- & 20th-century novel and book history; gender; nationalism; translation

Gerhild Williams (http://german.wustl.edu/people/williams_gerhild)
Vice Provost
Barbara Schaps Thomas and David M. Thomas Professor in the Humanities
Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
PhD in Comparative Literature, University of Washington
Early modern German and French literature and culture; demonology; Ottoman Eurasia

Associate Professors

Jennifer Kapczynski (http://german.wustl.edu/people/kapczynski_jennifer)
(On Leave)
PhD, University of California, Berkeley
20th- & 21st-century literature and film; democratization; gender theory; Holocaust studies

Erin McGlothlin (http://german.wustl.edu/people/mcgllothlin_erin)
Director of Graduate Studies
PhD, University of Virginia
Contemporary literature; Holocaust studies; Jewish studies; narrative theory

Assistant Professors

Kurt Beals (http://german.wustl.edu/people/kurt-beals)
PhD, University of California, Berkeley
20th- & 21st-century German literature and media; poetry; translation; experimentalism; digital media

Caroline Kita (http://german.wustl.edu/people/caroline-kita)
(On Leave)
PhD, Duke University
Austrian literature; Jewish studies; music and sound studies; theater

Christian Schneider (https://german.wustl.edu/people/christian.schneider)
PhD, Heidelberg University
Medieval literature; narrative theory; courtly culture; history of knowledge

Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow

Alexis Briley
PhD, Cornell University

Richard "Tres" Lambert III
PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Professor Emeritus

James Fitzgerald Poag (http://german.wustl.edu/people/poag_james-fitgerald)
PhD, University of Illinois
Early and high Middle Ages; history of the German language; medieval Bible exegesis; medieval law and literature; medieval romance; middle high German; mysticism

Degree Requirements

PhD in Germanic Languages and Literatures

A summary of program requirements is provided below.

German students who are interested in our exchange programs should contact Cecily Stewart Hawksworth (cecilyhawksworth@wustl.edu) for more information.

Courses

The PhD requires 51 hours of courses (including 36 AM credits) home-based in German. Students who complete interdisciplinary graduate certificates will be required to enroll in additional units as specified by the certificate-granting department or program. Students may not exceed 72 hours of course credit.

Each student must take courses in the full range of German literature and culture, to be chosen in consultation with the director of graduate studies. The following courses are required (exceptions are only possible upon review by the Graduate Committee):

- German 453 Theories of Literary and Cultural Analysis (3 units)
- German 456 Introduction to Middle High German Language and Literature (3 units)
- German 457 Introduction to Linguistics and the Structure of German (3 units)
- German 5051 Introduction to the Teaching of German (1 unit)
- German 5052 Teaching Practicum (1 unit)
• German 5053 Seminar in Theories of Foreign Language Pedagogy / Theories of Second Language Acquisition (2 units)
• German 5061 Apprenticeship in the Teaching of Literature and Culture I (1 unit)
• German 5062 Apprenticeship in the Teaching of Literature and Culture II (1 unit)

In addition, students are required to take one additional course in German literature prior to 1700.

These rules regarding required courses to be taken at Washington University apply to students joining the department with a BA. Students entering with a master's degree may already have fulfilled some of these requirements. The fulfillment of Washington University requirements with courses completed elsewhere should be discussed with the director of graduate studies, who will make a determination about transfer units.

Interdisciplinary Studies

Graduate students may wish to take courses in areas other than German. Of special interest are graduate offerings in art history; comparative literature; English; the digital humanities; film and media studies; history; music; philosophy; romance languages; and women, gender, and sexuality studies.

Students interested in completing one of our interdisciplinary certificates are generally required to complete additional seminars.

Examinations

Master’s Examination

Students who enter with a BA must complete an oral and written master's examination at the end of their second year. A student's performance on the exam serves the faculty as one important element in deciding whether the student will receive permission to proceed with their graduate studies. The department does not offer a terminal master’s degree.

Qualifying Examinations and Dissertation Proposal

Students taking the qualifying exams should display general knowledge and understanding of the primary materials, historical contexts, scholarly questions, and theoretical frameworks that are likely to drive their future dissertations. This process consists of three parts: two written qualifying papers and the dissertation proposal. Students typically choose a team of three faculty members at the beginning of the process, who will guide them through the exam procedure and serve as their readers. In the first exam, the student is required to situate their primary materials and their author(s) in their respective historical contexts and periods, with specific points of emphasis to be determined together with their advising team. The second exam serves to frame the student’s primary materials in theoretical terms. Within two months after passing the second qualifying exam, the student is required to write a 10-15 page dissertation proposal and present it orally to their advising team.

Foreign Language Requirement

Students planning to work primarily on post-1700 materials must display reading proficiency in French. The requirement may be satisfied by examination or by enrolling in and successfully completing French 400-401. Students are strongly encouraged to pursue reading knowledge in languages other than French if necessary to conduct particular research for their dissertation.

Students planning to work on pre-1700 materials must pass a reading exam in Latin. Reading knowledge of French is also strongly encouraged.

Teaching

PhD candidates are required to teach at least two years at Washington University under the guidance of the pedagogy specialist.

For more information beyond what is presented here, please contact our director of graduate studies, Erin McGlothlin (https://german.wustl.edu/people/mcglothlin_erin).