

# Germanic Languages and Literatures, PhD

## Doctoral Candidacy

To earn a PhD at Washington University, a student must complete all courses required by their department; maintain satisfactory academic progress; pass certain examinations; fulfill residence and Mentored Experience Requirements; write, defend, and submit a dissertation; and file an Intent to Graduate. For a general layout of doctoral degree general requirements in Arts & Sciences, including an explanation of Satisfactory Academic Progress, students should review the Doctoral Degree Academic Information page of the Arts & Sciences *Bulletin*.

## Program Requirements

- **Total Units Required: 51** (Note: Remission applies for a maximum of 72 graduate-level units.)
- **Degree Length: 5 years**
  - **Note:** Students must be enrolled in 9 graduate credits each semester to retain full-time status. As students complete their course work, if enrolled in fewer than 9 graduate credits, they must enroll in a specific Arts & Sciences graduate course that will show 0 units but does count as full-time status. Students should connect with their department to ensure proper enrollment prior to Add/Drop.
  - The Department of Comparative Literature and Thought provides students admitted into the PhD in German and Comparative Literature program with full financial support for a minimum of five years as long as the student remains in good academic standing. Funding includes full tuition remission and a generous stipend. Our admission package also includes a health fee subsidy.

## Required Courses

The PhD requires 51 units of courses that are 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 units of course credit.

These rules regarding required courses taken at Washington University apply to students joining the department with a bachelor's degree. 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 the transfer of credits.

**Minimum Grade Requirement:** B-

Students are encouraged to take a thematic and historical spread of courses in German-language literature and culture; these courses should be chosen in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. In addition, the following courses are required of all students.

## Theory and Methods

- One seminar addressing theories of literary and cultural analysis (German 553 or equivalent)

## Pedagogy

Code	Title	Units
German 5051	Introduction to the Teaching of German (normally taken during the second semester of the first year at Washington University)	1
German 5052	Teaching Practicum	1
German 5053	Theory and Practice of Foreign Language Pedagogy	2
German 5061	Apprenticeship in the Teaching of Literature and Culture I	1
German 5062	Apprenticeship in the Teaching of Literature and Culture II	1
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>6</b>

## Thematic and Methodological Areas

At least one seminar must be taken from any **three** of the following four categories. In rare cases, subject to the approval of the department chair and the Director of Graduate Studies, a course from outside of German might fulfill one of these categories. Course descriptions for each seminar offered in the department will indicate which of these categories is covered in the seminar.

### Category I: Translation Studies

Translation theory and practice are central to literary and cultural studies. With its interest in the cross-cultural exchange and circulation of texts, themes, motifs, genres, and ideas, Germanic Languages and Literatures is committed to performing and assessing theoretically the function and value of “translation” in the widest sense of the term, including both interlingual translation and other forms of textual transformation and adaptation.

### Category II: Media Studies

Courses in this category facilitate broad, theoretically informed, and historically grounded thinking about the effects of media transformation on cultural production and consumption as well as on the self-conceptions of authors (artists, composers), producers, and consumers (readers/viewers/listeners). They explore how media — including manuscripts, books, periodicals, photography, radio, television, film, digital media, and other forms — not only “mediate” but also structure knowledge, cultural exchange, artistic expression, perception, and indeed experience itself. They also build on the frameworks of media theory, critical theory, and media ecology to ask timely questions about the aesthetics, ethics, and politics of media. Attention may be given to competitions between media; to

remediation, intermediality, and the mutual incorporations of media; and to the ways that new media reconfigure the conception, function, and imagined provenance of older media, both in the past and in the 21st century.

### Category III: Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Race

Courses in this category examine the concepts of nationalism, ethnicity, and race — and, more broadly, historical and contemporary mechanisms, ideologies, and processes of group formation — through the historically contextualized study of literature, film, and other cultural artifacts, agents, and institutions. Perspectives examined could include those of insiders as well as those of outsiders or the deliberately excluded. Courses may focus on historical and contemporary cases and/or on the cultural and aesthetic responses to them. Possible topics include historical and theoretical perspectives on race and ethnicity; the experiences of Jews in German-speaking Europe, including acculturation, antisemitism, and the Shoah; relations between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires; German emigration to the United States and related aesthetic responses; contemporary immigration and immigrant communities in the German-speaking world; and new subcultures, new power relations, and new ideas of citizenship created by patterns of migration.

### Category IV: Digital Humanities

Digital humanities is a diverse and evolving field that uses digital tools and computational methods both to answer existing research questions and to generate new questions in humanistic disciplines. Courses in this area may address topics ranging from the construction of digital archives to the analysis of macroscopic trends in cultural change, and they will often employ techniques from the field of data science. Courses in this category may also reflect on the broader impact of information technology on society and culture, including the ways in which new technologies can reshape our conventional understandings of key aesthetic, political, and anthropological categories such as authorship, creativity, privacy, influence, agency, and even the category of the human itself.

### International Writer's Track

Students admitted in the International Writer's Track take 4 semesters of Comp Lit 512 Literature in the Making (3 units), or the equivalent, which count towards the 51 credit total.

### 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; higher education administration; 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.

## Foreign Language Requirement

Students planning to work primarily on post-1700 materials must display reading proficiency in at least one language other than German and English. In most cases this language will be French, and the requirement may be satisfied by examination or by enrolling in and successfully completing French 400 and French 401. If a language other than French is particularly relevant to a student's research interests and planned dissertation topic, the foreign language requirement may be fulfilled by the achievement of an equivalent level of reading proficiency in that language, upon approval by the Director of Graduate Studies.

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

## Examinations

### Master's Examination

Students who enter with a bachelor's degree must complete an oral and written master's examination at the end of their second year. A student's performance on both the oral and written exams is one important element affecting the faculty's decision about whether the student will receive permission to proceed with their graduate studies.

### Qualifying Examinations and Dissertation Prospectus

Students taking 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. The qualifying exam is usually taken during the fourth year of study for students entering with a bachelor's degree and during the third year for students entering with a master's degree. The qualifying exam process consists of four phases:

- Phase 1:** Development of a bibliography for the exams; filing of the Research Advisory Committee Form, which must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, no later than the end of the third year of graduate study
- Phase 2:** Preparation for and completion of two exams, each of which consists of a written portion and an oral portion
- Phase 3:** Creation and defense of a dissertation prospectus
- Phase 4:** Preparation and circulation of the dissertation abstract; filing of the Title, Scope and Procedure Form, which must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, no later than at the start of the fifth year of graduate study.

For the **first exam**, students are 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 the exam committee. The **second exam** serves to frame the student's primary materials in theoretical terms; it is meant to discuss in general terms one of the methodological approaches for the planned dissertation. The order of the exams may be reversed.

## Teaching

Doctoral candidates are required to complete a minimum of six semesters (or the equivalent) of mentored teaching experiences (MTEs) within the German department in order to be eligible for the degree; some students may have the opportunity to complete additional MTEs in other departments. Most of our students (particularly students who do not enter with a master's degree in German and with experience teaching German at the university level) will complete eight semesters of MTEs (the maximum allowable number) in order to prepare themselves for the rigorous demands of the job market in German.

For information beyond what is presented here, please contact [german@wustl.edu](mailto:german@wustl.edu).

## Qualifying Examinations

Progress toward the PhD is contingent upon the student passing examinations that are variously called *preliminary*, *qualifying*, *general*, *comprehensive*, or *major field exams*. The qualifying process varies according to the program. In some programs, it consists of a series of incremental, sequential, and cumulative exams over a considerable time. In others, the exams are held during a relatively short period of time. Exams may be replaced by one or more papers. The program, which determines the structure and schedule of the required examinations, is responsible for notifying the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, of the student's outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful.

## Mentored Experience Requirements

Doctoral students at Washington University must complete a department-defined Mentored Experience. The Mentored Experience Requirement is a doctoral degree milestone that is notated on the student's transcript when complete. Each department has an established Mentored Experience Implementation Plan in which the number of units that a student must earn through Mentored Teaching Experience(s) and/or Mentored Professional Experience(s) is defined. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plans outline how doctoral students within the discipline will be mentored to achieve competencies in teaching at basic and advanced levels. Some departments may elect to include Mentored Professional Experiences as an avenue for completing some units of the Mentored Experience Requirement. Doctoral students will enroll in LGS 6XXX Mentored Teaching Experience or LGS 7020 Mentored Professional Experience to signify their progression toward completing the overall Mentored Experience Requirement for the degree.

## The Doctoral Dissertation

A Research Advisory Committee (RAC) must be created no later than the end of the student's third year; departments may set shorter timelines (e.g., by the end of the student's second year) for this requirement. As evidence of the mastery of a specific field of knowledge and of the capacity for original scholarly work, each candidate must complete a dissertation that is approved by their RAC.

A Title, Scope & Procedure Form for the dissertation must be signed by the committee members and by the program chair. It must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, at least 6 months before the degree is expected to be conferred or before beginning the fifth year of full-time enrollment, whichever is earlier.

A Doctoral Dissertation Guide & Template that give instructions regarding the format of the dissertation are available on the website of the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Both should be read carefully at every stage of dissertation preparation.

The Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, requires each student to make the full text of the dissertation available to the committee members for their review at least 1 week before the defense. Most degree programs require 2 or more weeks for the review period; students should check with their faculty.

## The Dissertation Defense

Approval of the written dissertation by the RAC is necessary before the student can orally defend their dissertation. The Dissertation Defense Committee that observes and examines the student's defense consists of at least five members, who normally meet these criteria:

- Three of the five must be full-time Washington University faculty members or, for programs offered by Washington University-affiliated partners, full-time members of a Washington University-affiliated partner institution who are authorized to supervise PhD students and who have appropriate expertise in the proposed field of study; one of these three must be the PhD student's primary thesis advisor, and one may be a member of the emeritus faculty. A fourth member may come from inside or outside the student's program. The fifth member must be from outside the student's program; this fifth member may be a Washington University research professor or lecturer, a professor from another university, or a scholar from the private sector or government who holds a doctorate and maintains an active research program.
- Three of the five normally come from the student's degree program; at least one of the five must not.

All committees must be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, regardless of whether they meet the normal criteria.

The committee is appointed by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, upon the request of the degree program. The student is responsible for making the full text of the dissertation accessible to their committee members for their review in advance of the defense. Faculty and graduate students who are interested in the subject of the dissertation are normally welcome to attend all or part of the

defense but may ask questions only at the discretion of the committee members. Although there is some variation among degree programs, the defense ordinarily focuses on the dissertation itself and its relation to the student's field of expertise.

## Submission of the Dissertation

After the defense, the student must submit an electronic copy of the dissertation online to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. The submission website requires students to choose among publishing and copyrighting services offered by ProQuest's ETD Administrator. The degree program is responsible for delivering the final approval form, signed by the committee members at the defense and then by the program chair or director, to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Students who defend their dissertations successfully have not yet completed their PhD requirements; they finish earning their degree only when their dissertation submission has been accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

## Master's Degree Along the Way/ In Lieu of a PhD

- **Total Units Required: 36**
- **Degree Length: 2 years**

See the Master's Examination section above for more information.

Contact:	Graduate Program Administrator: Germanic Languages and Literatures
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