Germanic Languages and Literatures

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Majors

The Major in Germanic Languages and Literatures

Total units required: 25

Required courses:

German 340C and its 1-unit discussion section German 340D or German 341 and its 1-unit discussion section German 341D or German 342 and its 1-unit discussion section German 342D and the senior assessment (undertaken in conjunction with a 400-level seminar) are required for all majors.

German 340C/German 340D or German 341/341D or German 342/342D are required for admission to all 400-level courses except German 402, German 403D, German 404 and German 408D. Admission to 400-level courses (except German 402, German 403D, German 404 and German 408D) without the completion of German 340C or German 341 or German 342 is by departmental permission only.

Elective courses:

Students interested in studying German may declare German as their major or second major. Majors and second majors are required to complete 25 credit units of upper-level courses (202D and higher), at least 12 of which are on the 400 level. If students begin German at Washington University and follow the regular sequence of courses (German 101D–German 102D–German 201D), they will be ready to begin the German major after three semesters. With the exception of German 340C or German 341 or German 342, only courses taught in German will count toward the major. Students who wish to receive honors in German are required to write an honors thesis and must register for German 497–German 498 (with departmental permission) in addition to the 25 credits required for the major (for a total of 31 credit units). All majors and second majors are required to participate in the senior assessment interview in the final semester of their senior year.

Applications for admission to the honors program must be submitted by the first week of classes in the student’s final year of study.

Note: For both majors and minors, at least half of the courses at the 300 level and above must have been acquired either in residence at Washington University or in overseas programs affiliated with Washington University.

Additional Information

Study abroad: German majors or minors are encouraged to participate in one of our overseas study programs. The German department sponsors a semester and a year abroad at the University of Tübingen, Germany. To participate in the Tübingen program, students must complete German 202D (for the semester program), German 301D (for the year program), or their equivalent by the time the program begins. Upon returning to campus, German majors are required to take at least one 400-level course (other than German 497–German 498) during their senior year.

Washington University sponsors a summer program in Göttingen, Germany. Students who have taken at least one semester of German may be eligible for this intensive language program. Students interested in business are encouraged to apply for the Webster University international business internship or for the business internship in Koblenz, Germany, which is arranged by Washington University’s Olin Business School.

Senior Thesis in German, Departmental Distinction in German, and Latin Honors in German: Students who wish to be eligible for distinction in German must write a senior thesis in German during their final year at Washington University. Students receiving distinction in German may additionally qualify for Latin honors in German. The student chooses a thesis topic with the help of a faculty thesis adviser from the department. Upon acceptance of the thesis proposal (usually during the fall of the senior year), the student registers for the German 497–German 498 sequence. They present the senior thesis to their thesis adviser and a second reader approximately six weeks before the conclusion of their final semester at the university.