Graduate Program Description

The Department of German's graduate program is one of the largest and oldest in the country, recognized for its comprehensive coverage of German studies and the thorough preparation of candidates for its graduate degrees. The department is consistently among the most highly rated in the country, has a strong international reputation, and is near the top of the list of North American institutions in number of total graduate degrees granted in German. Graduates teach in colleges and universities across the country and around the world, affirming the department’s reputation and significance.

Of the more than 50 candidates who completed the Ph.D. in the department since the 1990s, 75 percent hold teaching and/or research positions at universities and colleges in the United States, Europe, Australia, and other countries. Others have careers with libraries, publishing houses, or government agencies. (A list of recent graduates and their placement can be found on the departmental website.)

The department is a place of lively intellectual exchange with a collegial and informal atmosphere and a high level of interaction among graduate students and faculty. A number of faculty and graduate students in the Department have been honored by the university for excellence in teaching.

The department is the home of the quarterly "Monatshefte", founded in 1899 and one of the leading peer-reviewed international scholarly journals in the field of German literature and culture. The "Journal of Germanic Linguistics," journal of the Society for Germanic Linguistics, is also produced in the department. The department additionally provides an editorial home for Diachronica, an international journal covering all aspects of historical and comparative linguistics.

The Wisconsin Workshop, an annual event organized by the department each fall since 1968, provides a forum for in-depth scholarly discussion on current literary and cultural topics. Speakers include university faculty and invited scholars from North American universities and from abroad. The proceedings are regularly published in book form. The Department regularly offers additional symposia and conferences on a variety of topics in linguistics, literary and cultural studies, German-American studies, pedagogy and Second Language Acquisition, contemporary German artists, and Dutch language, literature, and culture. Recent events have included conferences and symposia on the fall of the Berlin Wall, “Germanic Languages and Cultures in Global Perspectives”, “World Literature/s”, “Wisconsin Englishes”, and “Languages and Immigration”.

The Department’s Roundtable lecture series provides a forum for current research presentations and discussions, as do additional colloquia and workshops, a monthly literature colloquium, and readings and performances by authors and poets. Each year, the department hosts distinguished exchange professors and visiting scholars from Europe as part of its extensive national and international scholarly network. Graduate students are encouraged to take advantage of numerous opportunities for studying and conducting research in German-speaking countries and the Netherlands.

The University of Wisconsin provides outstanding research facilities in the area of German Studies. The university's Memorial Library contains one of the best German research collections in the country; the library of the Wisconsin State Historical Society is renowned especially for its German-American holdings. In addition, the department maintains its own Reading Room, a "Handbibliothek" with several thousand volumes of primary and secondary literature, for the benefit of its faculty and graduate students.

The Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, founded in 1983, is an international center for research on German-American history, language, and culture. Its research and outreach missions aim to provide better understanding of how German-speaking immigrants to this country helped shape their new environment and how they have been shaped by it.

The Center for German and European Studies (CGES), one of handful of Centers of Excellence in the US, is helping educate a new generation of experts on Germany and the new Europe across a wide variety of disciplines. It supports research and teaching of interdisciplinary collaboratives and seminars, and provides fellowships for graduate students interested in German and European studies.

The German and Dutch Graduate Student Association (GDGSA) represents graduate students in the Department. Its committees organize lectures, colloquia, and reading groups; its representatives to faculty committees participate in decisions regarding program changes on the graduate and undergraduate levels, course offerings, and other matters. The GDGSA meets every few weeks during the semester to exchange ideas and information about courses, conferences, lectures, fellowships, summer workshops, and other matters of interest to graduate students in the department. New graduate students are encouraged to attend the first meeting of the semester in order to meet the rest of the graduate students and to begin active participation in the graduate student community.
Degree Programs

The Department offers a broadly inclusive and flexible curriculum for the M.A. and Ph.D. in the entire range of medieval through contemporary literature and culture, a full spectrum of linguistics and philology, and a program in Dutch language, literature, and culture. Our program is unsurpassed in its comprehensive representation of the entire field of the study of German through individual faculty members' specializations and research publications, including early modern and medieval studies; film and media studies; Holocaust Studies; multicultural literature and cosmopolitanism; Gegenwartsliteratur; literary and cultural theory; poetics, stylistics, and narratology; 18th-century studies; literature in its sociocultural context; literary and cultural theory; women writers; Dutch literature and linguistics; historical and synchronic linguistics; applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and foreign language education. Offerings include interdisciplinary areas such as literature and other arts (especially image/text and literature/music), German-Americana, German-Jewish relations, literature and philosophy.

Graduate students are encouraged to pursue inter- and multidisciplinary work beyond the Department in such areas as art history, media studies, communication arts/cinema, comparative literature, history, linguistics, musicology, Scandinavian studies, visual studies, and women's studies. The Department of German also cooperates closely with the interdepartmental programs in European studies, medieval studies, Jewish studies, and Second Language Acquisition.

Curriculum Details:

The M.A. is a two-year degree that requires 10 courses (30 credits) and an M.A. exam. Three courses are required:
- German 650 (History of the German Language)
- German 612 (German Literary Movements since 1750), or alternately one of German 703, 708, or 709 (Literature of the 18th, 19th, or 20th/21st Centuries)
- German 722 (Theory of Teaching German)

The MA exam format encourages preparation for continuing work towards the Ph.D. For details, contact the Graduate Secretary (mkmears@wisc.edu) or consult the Graduate Policies available from the Graduate Secretary.

The Ph.D. requires an additional 8 courses (24 credits) for a total of 18 courses (54 credits) [for students entering with an MA from another institution: a total of 12 courses/36 credits, of which up to two can be transfer courses], an external Ph.D. minor, proof of proficiency in another foreign language, and a Preliminary Qualifying Exam in preparation for writing a Ph.D. thesis.
For details, contact the Graduate Secretary (mkmears@wisc.edu) or consult the Graduate Policies available from the Graduate Secretary.

In addition to course work, students participate in the rich intellectual offerings and additional research opportunities in and beyond the Department of German (see above, and details on the departmental website).

Ph.D. Minor

The department offers an external Ph.D. minor. Students outside the department may obtain a graduate minor in German by taking three graduate-level courses (9 credits), at least two of them at the 600-level or above.

Interested students should consult with the Department of German Graduate Secretary (mkmears@wisc.edu) and have the minor plan approved by the Chair.

Application and Admission to the Program:

Applicants for admission to graduate study in the German program are expected to demonstrate a strong record of prior and potential academic achievement in addition to excellent German language skills. Applications are judged on the basis of the previous academic record, Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores, the statement of purpose, study-abroad experience, list of courses in progress, writing sample in German (5-15 pages), and three letters of recommendation.

Applicants with a B.A. in German must have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) on the equivalent of the last 60 semester credits, and a GPA of at least 3.5 in German courses beyond the second-year level. Students with an M.A. in German must have a GPA in graduate work of at least 3.7 on a 4.0 scale. In special cases applicants who do not fulfill the above expectations may be admitted on probation.

All applicants must submit official transcripts of all university course work (or equivalents, including study abroad), Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores, a personal statement explaining the reasons for graduate study, a current c.v. or resume, a writing sample in German, and three letters of recommendation that evaluate previous study and potential for graduate study. International applicants must also provide TOEFL, MELAB, or IELTS scores, a financial statement form included with the application materials, and, if applying for a teaching assistantship, a ten-minute cassette tape recording with a sample of the applicant's spoken English.

Application to the UW-Madison Graduate School is an online procedure, with supporting documentation mailed to the Department of German. For admissions and information, please
see the departmental website and/or contact the Graduate Secretary (mkmears@wisc.edu). Applicants are encouraged to contact the department early in the fall if they wish additional information. Visits to the UW-Madison campus are welcomed by the faculty and graduate students.

**Financial Support**

Financial support is competitive. Please note the applications deadline for financial support – generally December 20. Graduate applicants admitted to the program are eligible for a limited number of comprehensive multi-year financial guarantees. These include teaching and project assistantships as well as fellowships. In addition to university fellowships, the department may award a small number of Distinguished Fellowships, and offers an unusually large and varied number of project assistantships, including research and editorial positions.

Fellowships, TA-ships and most PA-ships include in- and out-of-state tuition waivers. In addition, TA-ships held in the spring semester provide a tuition waiver for the summer session. Financial support also comes with access to health insurance at much-reduced cost. A teaching assistant typically is responsible for one section of beginning or intermediate German each semester with either 4 or 5 contact hours a week, depending on level. There are opportunities for teaching third-year courses and for summer TA-ships, as well as financial support for graduate student travel to conferences and research facilities.

**Course Offerings for Graduate Students**

**Literature and Culture Courses:**

- 701 Literature of the Middle Ages (750-1400)
- 702 German Literature 1400 to 1700
- 703 18th-Century German Literature
- 708 19th-Century German Literature
- 709 German Literature of the 20th and 21st Centuries
- 710 Background of German Literature
- 711 Special Topics in German Literature
- 740 German Literary Theory and Criticism
- 741 Topics in German Cultural Theory
- 742 Topics in German Cultural Studies
799 Independent Study
804 Interdisciplinary European Area Studies Seminar
947-949 Seminars in German Literature and Culture
990 Individual Research in Literature

**German Linguistics / Medieval German Language and Literature**

650 History of the German Language
651 Introduction to Middle High German
652 Readings in Middle High German
727 Topics in Applied Linguistics
751 Contrastive Grammar of English and German
755 Old Germanic Languages (Gothic, Old High German, Old Saxon)
758 Topics in Contemporary German
768 Comparative and Historical Grammar of the Old Germanic Languages
769 Introduction to Comparative Germanic Morphology
960 Seminar in German Linguistics
970 Advanced Seminar in German Linguistics
991 Individual Research in Linguistics and Germanic Philology

**Preparation for Teaching**

712 Exercises in German Style
720 College Teaching of German
721 Practicum in the Coordination of Undergraduate Language Instruction
722 Theory of Teaching German
723 Practicum in Teaching Undergraduate Literature
724 Practicum in Teaching Undergraduate Linguistics
725 Practicum in Teaching Undergraduate Culture

**Dutch**

311-314 Four Semesters Dutch for Graduate Students
325 Topics in Dutch Literature
335 Dutch Conversation and Composition
445 Topics in Dutch Culture
625 Letterkunde der Lage Landen
645 Cultuurkunde der Lage Landen

Some Graduate Seminars and Topics Courses offered by the Department of German (2006-2010):

• Amsterdam/Nieuw Amsterdam/ Nieuw York
• Buchwelt und Weltbuch
• Contemporary German: Phonology of German
• De multikulturele Samenleving
• Dialects in Middle-High German (1250-1450)
• Emblem, Allegory, Symbol
• German Language and Immigration in International Perspective (Interdisciplinary CGES Seminar)
• German Phonetics & Phonology
• Germanic Languages and Migration (Interdisciplinary CGES Seminar)
• German-Jewish Dialogue in the 18th century
• Historicizing the GDR (Interdisciplinary CGES Seminar)
• History of the German Language
• Hoelderlin, Kleist, Buechner
• Kafka und Benjamin
• Kosmopolitismus in deutschsprachiger Literatur, Philosophie, und Film
• Literary Criticism/Debate: 1759-1990
• Memory Discourses and Postwar German Cinema (Interdisciplinary CGES Seminar)
• Mimesis and Realisms
• Pennsylvania German Language and Culture
• Problems in Comparative German Linguistics
• Reading Romanticism
• Resistance and Subversion in Foreign Language Teaching & Learning
• Text, Literatur, Wissenschaft
• The German Language in America
• The Third Reich
• Tod in Literatur, Kunst und Musik
• Transnational Perspectives on German Studies (Interdisciplinary CGES Seminar)
• War, Peace and the Birth of a United Europe (Interdisciplinary CGES Seminar)
• Wiener Moderne
• Writings of German Americans