GERMANIC LANGUAGES (GRMN)

GRMN 011 Bad Taste
"Beauty is not a quality inherent to things: it only exists in the mind of the beholder." (David Hume) Most of us can recognize bad taste as soon as we see it: Harlequin romances, Elvis on black velvet, lawn ornaments. But bad taste also has a history, and kitsch has been identified as a peculiarly modern invention related to capitalism and consumerism. Beginning with a discussion of taste in the eighteenth century, we will investigate under what conditions good taste can go bad, for example when it is the object of mass reproduction, and, on the other hand, why bad taste in recent times has increasingly been viewed in positive terms. Categories such as the cute, the sentimental, the popular, the miniature, kitsch, and camp will be explored. We will also ask what forms of ideological work have been done by this brand of aesthetics, for example in the connection between politics and kitsch, femininity and the low-brow, or camp and queer identity. Writers and film-makers to be discussed include: Hume, Kant, Goethe, Flaubert, Bourdieu, Sacher-Masoch, Thomas Mann, Nabokov, Benjamin, Greenberg, Sontag, John Waters.
Taught by: MacLeod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Freshman seminar. All readings and lectures in English. No knowledge of German is required.

GRMN 016 Babylon Berlin: German Crime Books
Why are crime books and crime shows so popular? 2017 marked a moment in time when a serialized domestic TV show took off in Germany like wild fire. The first three episodes of "Babylon Berlin" were seen by an average 7.8 million viewers on ARD last year, achieving a 24.5% share and reaching a peak of 8.5 million. On Sky, it boasted the best ratings ever for a non-English series and was only beaten overall by the seventh season of "Game of Thrones." Babylon Berlin is based on Volker Kutscher's crime books. Thus, this course will trace the success of German crime books as a best-selling genre by analyzing the appeal of the whodunit format and by questioning the transnational appeal of this genre. "Babylon Berlin" exemplifies the success of German crime books because the treatment of historical events combined with a critical eye toward the Zeitgeist of cultural products sheds light on the representation of culture and its co-construction of a transnational identity.
Taught by: Frei
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Also Offered As: JWST 026

GRMN 023 In Praise of the Small in Literature and the Arts
We can memorize aphorisms and jokes, carry miniature portraits with us, and feel playful in handling small objects. This seminar will ask us to pay attention to smaller texts, art works, and objects that may easily be overlooked. In addition to reading brief texts and looking at images and objects, we will also read texts on the history and theory of short genres and the small.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 023
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Freshman seminar. All readings and lectures in English. No knowledge of German is required.

GRMN 026 Jews and China: Views from Two Perspectives
Jews in China?? Who knew?? The history of the Jews in China, both modern and medieval, is an unexpected and fascinating case of cultural exchange. Even earlier than the 10th century, Jewish trader from India or Persia on the Silk Road, settled in Kai Feng, the capital of the Northern Song Dynasty, and established a Jewish community that lasted through the nineteenth century. In the mid-nineteenth century, Jewish merchants, mainly from Iraq, often via India, arrived in China and played a major role in the building of modern Shanghai. After 1898, Jews from Russia settled in the northern Chinese city of Harbin, first as traders and later as refugees from the Bolshevik Revolution and Russian Civil War. In the first decades of the twentieth century, a few Jews from Poland and Russia visited China as tourists, drawn by a combination of curiosity about the cultural exoticism of a truly foreign culture and an affinity that Polish Jewish socialists and communists felt as these political movements began to emerge in China. During World War II, Shanghai served as a port of refuge for Jews from Central Europe. In this freshman seminar, we will explore how these Jewish traders, travelers, and refugees responded to and represented China in their writings. We will also read works by their Chinese contemporaries and others to see the responses to and perceptions of these Jews. We will ask questions about cultural translation: How do exchanges between languages, religions, and cultures affect the identities of individuals and communities? What commonalities and differences between these people emerge?
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: JWST 026
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 027 Euro Zone Crisis - The EU in a Currency War for Survival?
"Let me put it simply...there may be a contradiction between the interests of the financial world and the interests of the political world...We cannot keep constantly explaining to our voters and our citizens why the taxpayer should bear the cost of certain risks and not those people who have earned a lot of money from taking those risks." Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, at the G20 Summit, November 2010. In January 1999, a single monetary system united Germany, a core nation, with 10 other European states. Amidst the optimism of the euro’s first days, most observers forecast that Europe would progress toward an ever closer union. Indeed, in the ensuing decade, the European Union became the world’s largest trading area, the euro area expanded to include 17 member states, and the Lisbon Treaty enhanced the efficiency and democratic legitimacy of the Union. In 2009, Greece’s debt crisis exposed deep rifts within the European Union and developed into a euro zone crisis - arguably the most difficult test Europe has faced in the past 60 years. After two years of a more benign EURO debt situation, the risk of recession, EU sanctions against Russia, and a possible collision of a newly-elected Greek government with its creditors, the euro crisis returned with a vengeance in 2015. In addition, the pressure mounts for European leaders to find a solution to the refugee crisis which reached a peak in the fall of 2015. In 2016 the Brexit delivered the latest blow to the European Union, and the future of the European project without the UK looks bleak. The Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) is still fragile, and economic and political developments in 2017 could determine the future of the euro. Does the EU have what it takes to emerge from these crises? Will the European nations find a collective constructive solution that will lead to a fiscal union that implies further integration? Taught by: Shields, Susanne (Lauder Institute)
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Freshman seminar. All readings and lectures in English. No knowledge of German is required.

GRMN 101 Elementary German I
Designed for the beginning student with no previous knowledge of German. German 101, as the first course in the first-year series, focuses on the development of language competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. By the end of the semester, students will be able to engage in simple conversations about familiar things, know greetings and everyday expressions, they will be able to count and tell time, and negate sentences in day-to-day contexts. Furthermore, students will be able to speak about events that happened in the immediate past and express plans for the future. In addition, students will have developed reading strategies that allow them to glean information from simple newspaper and magazine articles and short literary texts. Because cultural knowledge is one of the foci of German 101, students will learn much about practical life in Germany and will explore German-speaking cultures on the Internet.

For BA Students: Language Course
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: GRMN 501
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 102 Elementary German II
This course is a continuation of GRMN 101 and is designed to strengthen and expand students’ listening, speaking, reading, and writing competence and to deepen an understanding of German-speaking cultures. By the end of the course, students will be able to handle a variety of day-to-day needs in a German-speaking setting and engage in simple conversations about personally significant topics. Students can expect to be able to order food and beverages, purchase things, and to be familiar with the German university system, the arts, and current social topics. Students will begin to be able to talk about the past and the future, make comparisons, describe people and things in increasing detail, make travel plans that include other European countries, and make reservations in hotels and youth hostels. By the end of the course students will be able to talk about their studies and about their dreams for the future. In addition, students will develop reading strategies that should allow them to understand the general meaning of articles, and short literary texts. Furthermore, students will feel more able to understand information when hearing German speakers talking about familiar topics. Cultural knowledge remains among one of the foci of German 102, and students will continue to be exposed to authentic materials.

For BA Students: Language Course
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: GRMN 502
Prerequisite: GRMN 101
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 103 Intermediate German I
This course is designed to improve students writing and speaking competence, to increase vocabulary, to develop grammar usage, and to help develop effective reading and listening strategies in German across literary genres and media as students interpret and analyze cultural, political, and historical moments in German-speaking countries and compare them with their own cultural practices. This course is organized around content-based modules and prepares students well for GRMN 104 and a minor or major in German.

For BA Students: Language Course
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: GRMN 503
Prerequisite: GRMN 102
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 104 Intermediate German II
A continuation of GRMN 103. Expands students writing and speaking competence in German, increases vocabulary and helps students practice effective reading and listening strategies. Our in-class discussions are based on weekly readings of literary and non-literary texts to facilitate exchange of information, ideas, reactions, and opinions. In addition, the readings provide cultural and historical background information. The review of grammar will not be the primary focus of the course. Students will, however, expand and deepen their knowledge of grammar through specific grammar exercises. Students will conclude the basic-language program at PENN by reading an authentic literary text; offering the opportunity to practice and deepen reading knowledge and to sensitize cultural and historical awareness of German-speaking countries.

For BA Students: Last Language Course
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: GRMN 504
Prerequisite: GRMN 103
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 106 Accelerated Elementary German
This course is intensive and is intended for dedicated, highly self-motivated students who will take responsibility for their learning and creation of meaning with their peers. An intensive two credit course in which two semesters of elementary German (GRMN 101 & 102) are completed in one. Introduction to the basic elements of spoken and written German, with emphasis placed on the acquisition of communication skills. Readings and discussions focus on cultural differences. Expression and comprehension are then expanded through the study of literature and social themes.
For BA Students: Language Course
Course usually offered in fall term
Also Offered As: GRMN 505
Activity: Lecture
2.0 Course Units

GRMN 107 Accelerated Intermediate German
This course is intensive and is intended for dedicated, highly self-motivated students who will take responsibility for their learning and creation of meaning with their peers. This accelerated course is designed to improve students writing and speaking competencies, to increase vocabulary, to deepen grammar usage, and to help develop effective reading and listening strategies in German across literary genres and media as students interpret and analyze cultural, political, and historical moments in German-speaking countries and compare them with their own cultural practices. This course is organized around content-based modules. Students conclude the basic-language program at PENN by reading an authentic literary text; offering the opportunity to practice and deepen reading knowledge and to sensitize cultural and historical awareness of German-speaking countries.
For BA Students: Last Language Course
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: GRMN 514
Prerequisite: GRMN 102 OR GRMN 106
Activity: Lecture
2.0 Course Units

GRMN 134 Origins of Nazism: From Democracy to Race War and Genocide
Where did the Nazis come from? Was the Weimar Republic bound to fail? Did the Treaty of Versailles or the Great Depression catapult the Nazis into power? What was the role of racism, of Anti-Semitism? How did the regime consolidate itself? What was the role of ordinary people? How do we explain the Holocaust and what kind of a war was the Second World War? Grappling with these and more questions, the first half of the course focuses on Germany’s first democracy, the Weimar Republic and its vibrant political culture. In the second half, we study on the Nazi regime, how it consolidated its power and remade society based on the concepts of race and struggle. Discussions of race and race-making are crucial throughout the course. In the name of the "racial purity," the Nazi state moved ruthlessly against Germany’s Jewish population and cleansed German society of all “undesirable” elements. These ideas and practices didn’t originate with the Nazis and they didn’t operate in a geopolitical vacuum. Thinking about Nazi racism and genocide in both its particular specifics and in a larger global historical context is the main goal of this course.
Taught by: Berg
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: HIST 134
Activity: Recitation
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 145 The Vikings
The Vikings were the terror of Europe from the late eight to the eleventh century. Norwegians, Danes and Swedes left their homeland to trade, raid and pillage; leaving survivors praying "Oh Lord, deliver us from the fury of the Norsemen!" While commonly associated with violent barbarism, the Norse were also farmers, craftsmen, and merchants. As their dragon ships sailed the waterways of Europe and beyond, they also transformed from raiders to explorers, discoverers and settlers of found and conquered lands. This course will introduce students to various facets of the culture and society of the Viking world ranging from honor culture, gender roles, political culture, mythology, and burial practices. We will also explore the range of Viking activity abroad from Kiev and Constantinople to Greenland and Vineland, the Viking settlement in North America. We will use material and archeological sources as well as literary and historical ones in order to think about how we know history and what questions we can ask from different sorts of sources. Notably, we will be reading Icelandic sagas that relate oral histories of heroes, outlaws, raiders and sailors that will lead us to question the lines between fact and fiction, and myth and history.
Taught by: Kuskowski
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: HIST 303
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 150 Water Worlds: Cultural Responses to Sea Level Rise & Catastrophic Flooding
As a result of climate change, the world that will take shape in the course of this century will be decidedly more inundated with water than we’re accustomed to. The polar ice caps are melting, glaciers are retreating, ocean levels are rising, polar bear habitat is disappearing, countries are jockeying for control over a new Arctic passage, while low-lying cities and small island nations are confronting the possibility of their own demise. Catastrophic flooding events are increasing in frequency, as are extreme droughts. Hurricane-related storm surges, tsunamis, and raging rivers have devastated regions on a local and global scale. In this seminar we will turn to the narratives and images that the human imagination has produced in response to the experience of overwhelming watery invasion, from Noah to New Orleans. Objects of analysis will include mythology, ancient and early modern diluvialism, literature, art, film, and commemorative practice. The basic question we’ll be asking is: What can we learn from the humanities that will be helpful for confronting the problems and challenges caused by climate change and sea level rise?
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Richter, Simon
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 150, COML 151, ENVS 150
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 151 Forest Worlds: Mapping the Arboreal Imaginary in Literature and Film
Can the humanities help us think differently about the forest? What happens if we imagine forests as the agents of their stories? At a time when humans seem unable to curb the destructive practices that place themselves, biodiversity, and the forests at risk, the humanities give us access to a record of the complex inter-relationship between forests and humanity. The course places a wide range of literature and film in which forests are strongly featured in relation to environmental history and current environmental issues. Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 152, COML 154, ENVS 151
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 152 Liquid Histories and Floating Archives
Climate change transforms the natural and built environments, and it is re-shaping how we understand, make sense, and care for our past. Climate changes history. This course explores the Anthropocene, the age when humans are remaking earth’s systems, from an on-water perspective. In on-line dialogue and video conferences with research teams in port cities on four continents, this undergraduate course focuses on Philadelphia as one case study of how rising waters are transfiguring urban history, as well as its present and future. Students projects take them into the archives at the Independence Seaport Museum and at Bartram’s Garden. Field trips by boat on the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers and on land to the Port of Philadelphia and to the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge invite transhistorical dialogues about how colonial and then industrial-era energy and port infrastructure transformed the region’s vast tidal marshlands wetlands. Excursions also help document how extreme rain events, storms, and rising waters are re-making the built environment, redrawing lines that had demarcated land from water. In dialogue with one another and invited guest artists, writers, and landscape architects, students final projects consider how our waters might themselves be read and investigated as archives. What do rising seas subsume and hold? Whose stories do they tell? What floats to the surface?
Taught by: Wiggin
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ANTH 154, COML 152, ENGL 052, ENVS 152, HIST 152
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 153 Is Europe Facing a Spiritual Crisis?
Is Europe Facing a Spiritual Crisis? On Contemporary Debates about Secularization, Religion and Rationality. Point of departure for this course is the difference between Europe and the US as to the role of religion in the unfolding of their respective “cultural identities” (cf. Charles Taylor, A Secular Age, 522-530). As a rule, both the US and Western Europe are now defined as secularized cultures, even if their histories and specific identities are strongly rooted in the Christian heritage. Given this contemporary situation, four research questions will be dealt with in this course. 1) What is meant by secularization? In answer to that question, two secularization theories are distinguished: the classic versus the alternative secularization thesis; 2) What is the historical impact of the nominalist turning-point at the end of the Middle Ages in this process towards secularization? 3) How did the relation between rationality and religion develop during modern times in Europe? 4) What is the contemporary outcome of this evolution in so-called postmodern / post-secular Europe and US? We currently find ourselves in this so-called postmodern or post-secular period, marked by a sensitivity to the boundaries of (modern) rationality and to the fragility of our (modern) views on man, world and God. In this respect, we will focus on different parts of Europe (Western and Eastern Europe alike) and will refer to analogies and differences between Western Europe and US. This historical-themed exposition is illustrated by means of important fragments from Western literature (and marginally from documents in other arts) and philosophy. We use these fragments in order to make more concrete the internal philosophical evolutions in relation to corresponding changes in diverse social domains (religion, politics, economy, society, literature, art...).
Taught by: Vanheeswijck
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: COML 153, DTCH 153
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 156 Queer German Cinema
Taught in English. This course offers an introduction into the history of German-language cinema with an emphasis on depictions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer themes. The course provides a chronological survey of Queer German Cinema from its beginnings in the Weimar Republic to its most recent and current representatives, accompanied throughout by a discussion of the cultural-political history of gay rights in the German-speaking world. Over the course of the semester, students will learn not only cinematic history but how to write about and close-read film. No knowledge of German or previous knowledge required.
Taught by: Fleishman
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 156, COML 156, GWS 156
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 180 German in Residence
The German House is a half-credit course with concentrations in German conversation, film, and culture. Though many students enroll for credit, others often come to select events. All interested parties are invited, and you do not have to actually live in the house to enroll for credit. Students from all different levels of language proficiency are welcome. Beginners learn more from advanced students, and all enjoy a relaxed environment for maintaining or improving their German language skills.
For BA Students: Other Language Courses
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
0.5 Course Units
GRMN 181 Comparative Cultures of Sustainability
Sustainability is more than science, engineering, policy, and design. Surveying the world, we see that the politics and practice of sustainability play out in different ways depending on cultural factors. Some cultures are more prone to pursue ecological goals than others. Why do the environmental history and experience of a nation affect policy? Do nature and the environment play a crucial role in the cultural memory of a nation? Can cultural components be effectively leveraged in order to win approval for a politics of sustainability? And what can we, as residents of a country where climate change and global warming are flashpoints in an enduring culture war, learn from other cultures? This course is designed to equip undergraduate students with the historical and cultural tools necessary to understand the cultural aspects of sustainability in two countries noted for their ecological leadership and cultural innovation, Germany and the Netherlands. Summer abroad course. This hybrid course combines online instruction with a short-term study abroad experience in Berlin and Rotterdam. During the pre-tip online portion of the course, students will become acquainted with the cultural histories of German and Dutch attitudes toward sustainability and the environment through a combination of recorded lectures by the instructor, reading assignments, viewing assignments (documentary and feature films), threaded discussions, and short written assignments. The goal of the pre-trip instruction are to help students develop tools for analyzing and interpreting cultural difference, construct working models of German and Dutch concepts of sustainability, and formulate hypotheses about the relationship between culture and policy in Germany and the Netherlands. The class will spend a total of ten days in Europe: five days in Berlin and five days in the area of Rotterdam. The days will be jam-packed with visits to important sites of sustainable practice; discussion with policy makers, activists, and scientists; and immersion in the cultures of the Netherlands and Germany. Upon our return from Europe, the class will debrief and students will present online projects. There are no prerequisites or language requirements.
Taught by: Richter
Course usually offered summer term only
Also Offered As: ENVS 181
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 203 Texts and Contexts
In this course, you will explore themes of cultural and historical significance in contemporary German-speaking countries through literature and nonfiction, through film and current event media coverage. Whether you wish to dive deeply into historical or political contexts, explore untranslatable cultural phenomena or the aesthetic rhythm and semantic complexity of the German language, GRMN 203 Texts and Contexts will inspire your imagination and deepen your understanding of German language, culture and literature. This is a required course for all courses taught in German at or above the 200 level.
For BA Students: Advanced Language Course
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: GRMN 506
Prerequisite: GRMN 104
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 219 Business German: A Macro Perspective
This course offers you insights into the dynamics of Business German, while taking a macro approach. Examples of various course topics include: economic geography and its diversity, the changing role of the European Union, and the economic importance of national transportation and tourism. In addition, the course emphasizes the development of students’ discourse competencies, Business German vocabulary and grammar. Course assignments include oral presentations on current events, class discussions, role-play, and collaborative group work. Class time will be utilized to practice speaking, answering questions, reviewing exercises and holding group discussions on various topics. Class participation is a key component of this course. Prerequisite: No previous knowledge of economics or business required. Course taught in German.
For BA Students: Advanced Language Course
Taught by: James
Course usually offered in fall term
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: No previous knowledge of economics or business required. Course taught in German.

GRMN 220 Business German: A Micro Perspective
This course is designed to enhance your speaking, reading and writing skills, in addition to helping you build a strong foundation in business vocabulary. Course objectives include acquiring skills in cross cultural communication, teamwork, business management, and creating a business plan. German grammar will be covered on a need be basis. This course will prepare you to perform and contribute while in a German-speaking business environment. Taught in German.
For BA Students: Advanced Language Course
Taught by: James
Course usually offered in spring term
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 230 Topics in Dutch Studies
Topics vary annually.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: DTCH 230
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 232 Topics in European History
The title for Fall 2017 is: The Nazi Revolution: Power and Ideology.
Taught by: Steinberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CLST 230, COML 248, HIST 230, ITAL 230, JWST 230
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 237 Berlin: History, Politics, Culture
What do you know about Berlin’s history, architecture, culture, and political life? The present course will offer a survey of the history of Prussia, beginning with the seventeenth century, and the unification of the small towns of Berlin and Koelln to establish a new capital for this country. It will tell the story of Berlin’s rising political prominence in the eighteenth century, and its position as a center of the German and Jewish Enlightenment. It will follow Berlin’s transformation into an industrial city in the nineteenth century, its rise to metropolis in the early twentieth century, its history during the Third Reich, and the post-war cold war period. The course will conclude its historical survey with a consideration of Berlin’s position as a capital in reunified Germany. The historical survey will be supplemented by a study of Berlin’s urban structure, its significant architecture from the eighteenth century (i.e. Schinkel) to the nineteenth (new worker’s housing, garden suburbs) and twentieth centuries (Bauhaus, Speer designs, postwar rebuilding, GDR housing projects, post-unification building boom). In addition, we will read literary texts about the city, and consider the visual art and music created in and about Berlin, and focus on Berlin’s Jewish history. The course will be interdisciplinary with the fields of German Studies, history, history of art, urban studies, and German-Jewish studies. It is also designed as a preparation for undergraduate students who are considering spending a junior semester with the Penn Abroad Program in Berlin. All readings and lectures in English.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 237, COML 237, HIST 237, URBS 237
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 239 Sustainability & Utopianism
This seminar explores how the humanities can contribute to discussions of sustainability. We begin by investigating the contested term itself, paying close attention to critics and activists who deplore the very idea that we should try to sustain our, in their eyes, dystopian present, one marked by environmental catastrophe as well as by an assault on the educational ideals long embodied in the humanities. We then turn to classic humanist texts on utopia, beginning with More’s fictive island of 1517. The "origins of environmentalism" lie in such depictions of island edens (Richard Grove), and our course proceeds to analyze classic utopian texts from American, English, and German literatures. Readings extend to utopian visions from Europe and America of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as literary and visual texts that deal with contemporary nuclear and flood catastrophes. Authors include: Bill McKibben, Jill Kerr Conway, Christopher Newfield, Thomas More, Francis Bacon, Karl Marx, Henry David Thoreau, Robert Owens, William Morris, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Ayn Rand, Christa Wolf, and others. Taught in English.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Wiggin
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 209, ENGL 275, ENVS 239
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 240 Global Sustainabilities
This research-oriented seminar focuses on the ways in which "sustainability" and "sustainable development" are linguistically and culturally translated into the world’s languages. We may take the terms for granted, but they have only really been on the global stage since they were widely introduced in the 1987 United Nations report, Our Common Future. Seminar participants will first become acquainted with the cultural and conceptual history of the terms and the UN framework within which sustainability efforts directly or indirectly operate. Having established the significance of cultural and linguistic difference in conceiving and implementing sustainability, participants will collaboratively develop a research methodology in order to begin collecting and analyzing data. We will draw heavily on Penn’s diverse language communities and international units. Seminar members will work together and individually to build an increasingly comprehensive website that provides information about the world’s languages of sustainability.
Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 241
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 242 The Fantastic and Uncanny in Literature: Ghosts, Spirits & Machines
Do we still believe in spirits and ghosts? Do they have any place in an age of science of technology? Can they perhaps help us to define what a human being is and what it can do? We will venture on a journey through literary texts from the late eighteenth century to the present to explore the uncanny and fantastic in literature and life. Our discussions will be based on a reading of Sigmund Freud’s essay on the uncanny, and extraordinary Romantic narratives by Ludwig Tieck, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Prosper Merimee, Villiers de Isle-Adam, and others. All readings and lectures in English.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 126, GSWS 243
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 244 Metropolis: Culture of the City
An exploration of modern discourses on and of the city. Topics include: the city as site of avant-garde experimentation; technology and culture; the city as embodiment of social order and disorder; traffic and speed; ways of seeing the city; the crowd; city figures such as the detective, the criminal, the flaneur, the dandy; film as the new medium of the city. Special emphasis on Berlin. Readings by, among others, Dickens, Poe, Baudelaire, Rilke, Doeblin, Marx, Engels, Benjamin, Krakauer. Films include Fritz Lang’s Metropolis and Tom Tykwer’s Run Lola Run. All lectures and readings in English.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: MacLeod
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 244, COML 254, URBS 244
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 247 Free Radicals: Marx, Marxism, and the Culture of Revolution

“A spectre is haunting Europe–the spectre of Communism”: This, the famous opening line of The Communist Manifesto, will guide this course’s exploration of the history, legacy, and potential future of Karl Marx’s most important texts and ideas, even long after Communism has been pronounced dead. Contextualizing Marx within a tradition of radical thought regarding politics, religion, and sexuality, we will focus on the philosophical, political, and cultural origins and implications of his ideas. Our work will center on the question of how his writings seek to counter or exploit various tendencies of the time; how they align with the work of Nietzsche, Freud, and other radical thinkers to follow; and how they might continue to haunt us today. We will begin by discussing key works by Marx himself, examining ways in which he is both influenced by and appeals to many of the same fantasies, desires, and anxieties encoded in the literature, arts and intellectual currents of the time. In examining his legacy, we will focus on elaborations or challenges to his ideas, particularly within cultural criticism, postwar protest movements, and the cultural politics of the Cold War. In conclusion, we will turn to the question of Marxism or Post-Marxism today, asking what promise Marx’s ideas might still hold in a world vastly different from his own. All readings and lectures in English.

For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 247, PHIL 247
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 248 Nietzsche’s Modernity and the Death of God

"God is dead." This famous, all too famous death sentence, issued by the 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, also signaled the genesis of a radical challenge to traditional notions of morality, cultural life, and the structure of society as a whole. In this course we will examine both the "modernity" of Nietzsche’s thought and the ways in which his ideas have helped to define the very concept of Modernity (and, arguably, Postmodernity) itself. In exploring the origin and evolution of Nietzsche’s key concepts, we will trace the ways in which his work has been variously revered or refuted, championed or co-opted, for more than a century. We will survey his broad influence on everything from philosophy and literature to music and art, theater and psychology, history and cultural theory, politics and popular culture. Further, we will ask how his ideas continue to challenge us today, though perhaps in unexpected ways. As we will see, Nietzsche wanted to teach us “how to philosophize with a hammer” All readings and lectures in English.

Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 268, PHIL 067
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 249 Topics In Modernism

This course explores an aspect of literary modernism intensively; specific course topics will vary from year to year. Past offerings have included seminars on the avant-garde, on the politics of modernism, and on its role in shaping poetry, music, and the visual arts. See the English Department’s website at www.english.upenn.edu for a description of the current offerings. Prerequisite: Some knowledge of 20th-century poetry. Spaces will be reserved for English majors.

Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 385, COML 140, ENGL 259, FREN 259
Prerequisites: Pre-requisites some knowledge of 20th-century poetry.
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 253 Freud: The Invention of Psychoanalysis

No other person of the twentieth century has probably influenced scientific thought, humanistic scholarship, medical therapy, and popular culture as much as Sigmund Freud. This seminar will study his work, its cultural background, and its impact on us today. In the first part of the course, we will learn about Freud’s life and the Viennese culture of his time. We will then move to a discussion of seminal texts, such as excerpts from his Interpretation of Dreams, case studies, as well as essays on psychoanalytic practice, human development, definitions of gender and sex, neuroses, and culture in general. In the final part of the course, we will discuss the impact of Freud’s work. Guest lecturers from the medical field, history of science, psychology, and the humanities will offer insights into the reception of Freud’s work, and its consequences for various fields of study and therapy.

For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 253, GSWS 252, HIST 253
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 257 Fascist Cinemas

Cinema played a crucial role in the cultural life of Nazi Germany and other fascist states. As cinema enthusiasts, Goebbels and Hitler were among the first to realize the important ideological potential of film as a mass medium and saw to it that Germany remained a cinema powerhouse producing more than 1000 films during the Nazi era. In Italy, Mussolini, too, declared cinema "the strongest weapon." This course explores the world of "fascist" cinemas ranging from infamous propaganda pieces such as The Triumph of the Will to popular entertainments such as musicals and melodramas. It examines the strange and mutually defining kinship between fascism more broadly and film. We will consider what elements mobilize and connect the film industries of the Axis Powers: style, genre, the aestheticization of politics, the creation of racialized others. More than seventy years later, fascist cinemas challenge us to grapple with issues of more subtle ideological insinuation than we might think. Weekly screenings with subtitles. All readings and discussions in English.

For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: MacLeod
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 257, COML 269, ITAL 257
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 258 German Cinema

An introduction to the momentous history of German film, from its beginnings before World War One to developments following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and German reunification in 1990. With an eye to film’s place in its historical and political context, the course will explore the “Golden Age” of German cinema in the Weimar Republic, when Berlin vied with Hollywood; the complex relationship between Nazi ideology and entertainment during the Third Reich; the fate of German film-makers in exile during the Hitler years; post-war film production in both West and East Germany; the call for an alternative to “Papa’s Kino” and the rise of New German Cinema in the 1960’s. All readings and discussions in English.

For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Fleishman
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 258, COML 270
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 259 Topics German Cinema
This topic course explores aspects of Film History intensively. Specific course topics vary from year to year. See the Cinema Studies website at http://cinemastudies.sas.upenn.edu for a description of the current offerings.
Taught by: Katz, Corrigan, Decherney, Beckman, Fleishman
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 259, COML 261, GRMN 550
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 261 Jewish Films and Literature
From the 1922 silent film "Hungry Hearts" through the first "talkie," "The Jazz Singer," produced in 1927, and beyond "Schindler's List," Jewish characters have confronted the problems of their Jewishness on the silver screen for a general American audience. Alongside this Hollywood tradition of Jewish film, Yiddish film blossomed from independent producers between 1911 and 1939, and interpreted literary masterpieces, from Shakespeare's "King Lear" to Sholom Aleichem's "Tevye the Dairymen," primarily for an immigrant, urban Jewish audience. In this course, we will study a number of films and their literary sources (in fiction and drama), focusing on English language and Yiddish films within the framework of three dilemmas of interpretation: a) the different ways we "read" literature and film, b) the various ways that the media of fiction, drama, and film "translate" Jewish culture, and c) how these translations of Jewish culture affect and are affected by their implied audience. All readings and lectures in English.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 279, COML 265, ENGL 279, JWST 263
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 262 Women in Jewish Literature
"Jewish woman, who knows your life? In darkness you have come, in darkness do you go." J. L. Gordon (1890). This course will bring into the light the long tradition of women as readers, writers, and subjects in Jewish literature. All texts will be in translation from Yiddish and Hebrew, or in English. Through a variety of genres -- devotional literature, memoir, fiction, and poetry -- we will study women's roles and selves, the relations of women and men, and the interaction between Jewish texts and women's lives. The legacy of women in Yiddish devotional literature will serve as background for our reading of modern Jewish fiction and poetry from the past century. The course is divided into five segments. The first presents a case study of the Matriarchs Rachel and Leah, as they are portrayed in the Hebrew Bible, in rabbinic commentary, in pre-modern prayers, and in modern poems. We then examine a modern novel that recasts the story of Dinah, Leah's daughter. Next we turn to the seventeenth century Glikl of Hamel, the first Jewish woman memoirist. The third segment focuses on devotional literature for and by women. In the fourth segment, we read modern women poets in Yiddish, Hebrew, and English. The course concludes with a fifth segment on fiction written by women in Yiddish, Hebrew, and English. All readings and lectures in English.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GSWS 162, JWST 268, NELC 154
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 263 Jewish American Literature
What makes Jewish American literature Jewish? What makes it American? This course will address these questions about ethnic literature through fiction, poetry, drama, and other writings by Jews in America, from their arrival in 1654 to the present. We will discuss how Jewish identity and ethnicity shape literature and will consider how form and language develop as Jewish writers "immigrate" from Yiddish, Hebrew, and other languages to American English. Our readings, from Jewish American Literature: A Norton Anthology, will include a variety of stellar authors, both famous and less-known, including Isaac Mayer Wise, Emma Lazarus, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Celia Dropkin, Abraham Cahan, Anzia Yezierska, Saul Bellow, Philip Roth, Cynthia Ozick, and Allegra Goodman. Students will come away from this course having explored the ways that Jewish culture intertwines with American culture in literature. All readings and lectures in English.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 277, JWST 277
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 264 Translating Cultures: Literature on and in Translation
"Languages are not strangers to one another," writes the great critic and translator Walter Benjamin. Yet two people who speak different languages have a difficult time talking to one another, unless they both know a third, common language or can find someone who knows both their languages to translate what they want to say. Without translation, most of us would not be able to read the Bible or Homer, the foundations of Western culture. Americans wouldn't know much about the cultures of Europe, China, Africa, South America, and the Middle East. And people who live in or come from these places would not know much about American culture. Without translation, Americans would not know much about the diversity of cultures within America. The very fabric of our world depend upon translation between people, between cultures, between texts. With a diverse group of readings--autobiography, fiction, poetry, anthropology, and literary theory--this course will address some fundamental questions about translating language and culture. What does it mean to translate? How do we read a text in translation? What does it mean to live between two languages? Who is a translator? What are different kinds of literary and cultural translation? what are their principles and theories? Their assumptions and practices? Their effects on and implications for the individual and the society?
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 260, JWST 264
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 279 Introduction to Literary Theory
This course introduces students to major issues in the history of literary theory.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 094, ENGL 094
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 301 Handschrift-Hypertext: Deutsche Medien
This course will provide an introduction to German-language literary studies through exemplary readings of short forms: fables, fairy tales, aphorisms, stories, novellas, feuilletons, poems, songs, radio plays, film clips, web projects and others. Paying particular attention to how emergent technology influences genre, we will trace an evolution from Minnesang to rock songs, from early print culture to the internet age and from Handschrift to hypertext. Students will have ample opportunity to improve their spoken and written German through class discussion and a series of internet-based assignments. Readings and discussions in German. Prerequisite: This course will be offered every spring semester. Taught in German. For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector Course usually offered in spring term Prerequisite: GRMN 203 Activity: Lecture 1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 302 Places of Memory. Lieux de memoire. Erinnerungsorte.
What is culture? What is German? Where are the borders between German, Austrian and Swiss culture? What is part of the "cultural canon"? Who decides and what role does memory play? Relying on the theory of collective memory (Halbwachs) and the concept of "places of memory" (Erinnerungsorte; Nora, Francois/Schulze) and with reference to exemplary scholarly and literary texts, debates, songs, films, documents, and paintings from high and pop culture, this course will weave a mosaic of that which (also) constitutes German or German-language culture. Prerequisite: This course will be offered every fall semester. Taught in German. Course usually offered in fall term Prerequisite: GRMN 203 Activity: Lecture 1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 311 Krautrock und die Folgen
Prerequisite: Taught in German. Taught by: Hahmann, Lewis Course not offered every year Prerequisite: GRMN 203 Activity: Lecture 1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 323 Writing in Dark Times: German Literature
The rise of Hitler and the Nazis in 1933 radically disrupted the literary marketplace in Germany. Public book burnings were the most visible sign of a complete reorganization of the literary world. What was it like to be a writer in the Third Reich? How did censorship work? What kind of choices were writers forced to make? What political roles did writers adopt? Under what conditions could they publish? Who read their books and how did they read them? These are some of the questions we will ask as we become acquainted with German writers in ideological adherence or alliance, in exile throughout Europe and the Americas, in "inner emigration," even in concentration camps, and in hiding. By focusing on their writing, we will shed light on the value of literature in dark times. Taught by: Richter Course not offered every year Also Offered As: GRMN 547 Activity: Lecture 1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 324 German Ideas and Nazi Ideology
Right-wing movements are often considered to be a reservoir of those who are left behind and economic losers. This seems to apply as much today as it did to the fascist movements of the first half of the 20th century. Admittedly, the economic situation has had a considerable influence on the development and success of these movements and most intellectuals have obviously reacted with open rejection to the aggressive and racist policies, which has led to mass emigration, especially to the United States. It must be noted, however, that the movement itself was supported by a prominent conservative worldview from which it emerged and through which it is best understood. The notion of the "Downfall of the West" (Oswald Spengler) or the prevailing view among the intellectual elite that "Germany's soul is the place where Europe's spiritual oppositions are carried out" (Thomas Mann) and the resulting disdain for political business, are all expressions of the idea of a special historical responsibility of the Germans. Even though this intellectual elite was opposed to the National Socialist movement, it must be said that the most renowned thinkers not only arranged themselves with the regime, but even supported it at times. Three particularly important examples are Martin Heidegger, Carl Schmitt and Gottfried Benn. Today they are counted among the intellectual giants of the 20th century and their works are studied worldwide, including the University of Pennsylvania. In this seminar, the spirit of National Socialism will be explored. To this end, we will look at the intellectual background in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, but especially at the period between the two wars, before we will then intensively deal with the National Socialist involvement of the three thinkers Heidegger, Schmitt, and Benn. Taught by: Hahmann Course not offered every year Prerequisite: GRMN 104 Activity: Lecture 1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 356 Crime and Detection - Dark Deeds
The detective story and the crime drama are time-honored genres of literature and popular culture. We are drawn to morbid scenes of violence and crime, and satisfied by the apprehension of criminals and their punishment. At the same time, the process of detection, of deciphering clues, is much like the process of reading and interpretation. Prerequisite: Taught in German. In this course we will read a variety of detective and crime stories, some by famous authors (e.g., Droste-Huelshoff, Fontane, Handke), others by contemporary authors that address interesting aspects of German culture (e.g., Turkish-Germans, gay and lesbian subcultures, DDR and Wende). We will also look at episodes from popular West, East, and post-reunification German TV crime shows (e.g., Tatort). Taught by: Frei Course not offered every year Activity: Lecture 1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 361 Staging the 20th Century
Prerequisite: Topics vary annually. Course taught in German. Topic for Spring 2014: "Staging the Middle Ages". Course not offered every year Prerequisite: GRMN 203 Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit Notes: Topics vary annually. Course taught in German. Topic for Spring 2014: "Staging the Middle Ages".
GRMN 363 Kant's Critical Project
This seminar is dedicated to Kant's critical philosophy. In particular, the Critique of pure Reason, which is the first of three Critiques, ranks amongst the most important texts of modern philosophy. Even in contemporary debates, Kantian claims still play a crucial role and basic knowledge of Kant's critical philosophy is often assumed. In this seminar we will deal with central passages from different works which, taken together, give a good picture of Kant's critical revision of classical metaphysics. We shall discuss important conceptions and ideas of Kant's mature philosophy, such as the nature of transcendental aesthetics and the resulting distinction between a thing-in-itself and appearance, the meaning and application of the categories, the justification and determination of human freedom, and the role of the moral law for Kant's so-called practical metaphysics.
Taught by: Hahmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 362, PHIL 565
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 364 Topics vary annually. The topic for Spring 2015 is: Unhuman Encounters
Topics vary annually. The course description for Spring 2015 is as follows: Typically "the Other" stands for a person or a group of people from another cultural background. But there have always been other encounters that forced people to distinguish themselves from an "other". Foremost, in order to define what is "human", the "unhuman" needed to be described. Initially, this meant distinguishing the human from the rest of nature. With the industrial revolution, the technological became a concern--machines as monsters. On a figurative level, we have the supernatural, ghosts, aliens, and cyborgs. In this course we will explore the ways in which real and imagined encounters with these "other Others" are depicted in German language literature and culture. Prerequisite: Taught in German.
Taught by: Dayioglu-Yucel
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 373 Critical Theory of Christa Wolf: What remains?
Understood as one of the most prominent writers of the GDR, Christa Wolf's literary contributions shape cultural production of former East Germany and beyond. Nevertheless, her critical engagement with the writing process and the role that memory plays for identity formation and a collective historical process remain less known. This course will shed light on Wolf's iconographic text Die Dimension des Autors, in which she develops the notion of fossilization--medallions of memory--to unpack cultural and historical productions. Indeed, the course traces her most influential texts such as Storfall, Kassandra, Kindheitsmuster and Was bleibt? within her theoretical framework, thereby offering students an opportunity to connect East German literary production with critical theory. The course seeks to illuminate the intrinsic connections between cultural products, practices and perspectives. The course will be taught in German and could fulfill Cross-Cultural Analysis.
Taught by: Frei
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: GRMN 301
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 375 German Literature after 1945
Focus on the continuity of the literary tradition, innovation, and prominent themes related to coming-of-age in today's society, and specific stylistic experiments. Topics include: the changing literary perspective on German history and World War II; the representation of such prominent issues as individual reponsibility, German reunification, and human relations in modern society. Prerequisite: Taught in German.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 379 Decadence
The period of the late nineteenth and turn to the twentieth century has often been described as a time of decadence--a decline in the "standards" of morals and virtue. While Freud explored the nature of sexual desire, writers like Schnitzler or Wedekind made this exploration central for their stories or plays. The course will focus on the literature and culture of fin-de-siecle Vienna and Berlin, and consider a variety of texts as well as their later reception and translation into film. Prerequisite: Lectures and discussion in German.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 381 Topics in German Culture
Taught by: Hahmann
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 401 Trans(l)its
Drawing on Goethe's musings on "world literature", the course focuses on authors who have arrived at their German words via global, worldly itineraries. The course considers movements between languages, including those of the students themselves and encourages students to develop their own voice as authors via a series of critical and creative writing exercise. At the same time, students develop strategies to reflect on their own language learning. This course provides an important space for German-learners at Penn to draw on one another’s experiences in the program and to build a sense of community. The course is required for all German majors in the Fall semester of their senior year. Prerequisite: This course will be offered every fall semester.
Taught by: Wiggin, MacLeod
Course usually offered in fall term
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 402 Independent Study-Senior.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Independent Study
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 507 Elementary Middle High German
Designed to familiarize the student with the principal elements of Middle High German grammar and to develop skills in reading and translating a major work of the twelfth century. Limited text interpretation.
Prerequisite: Middle High German for Reading Knowledge will be taught in English.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 509 Topics in Yiddish Literature - Modernist Jewish Poetry.
One version of this seminar considers works by Jewish women who wrote in Yiddish, Hebrew, English, and other languages in the late 19th through the 20th century. The texts, poetry and prose, will include both belles lettres and popular writings, such as journalism, as well as private works (letters and diaries) and devotional works. The course will attempt to define "Jewish writing," in terms of language and gender, and will consider each writer in the context of the aesthetic, religious, and national ideologies that prevailed in this period. Because students will come with proficiency in various languages, all primary texts and critical and theoretical materials will be taught in English translation. However, those students who can, will work on the original texts and share with the class their expertise to foster a comparative perspective. Because we will be discussing translated works, a secondary focus of the course will, in fact, be on literary translation's process and products. Another version of this seminar presents Jewish modernism as an international phenomenon of the early 20th century. The course will attempt to define "Jewish modernism" through the prism of poetry, which inevitably, given the historical events in Europe and America during this time, grapples with aesthetic, religious, and national ideologies and methods. The syllabus will focus mainly on poetry written in Yiddish and English, and will also include German, Russian, and Hebrew verse. All poetry, critical, and theoretical materials will be taught in English translation, although students who know the languages will work on the original texts and will bring to the table a comparative perspective. Because we will be discussing translated poems, a secondary focus of the course will, in fact, be on literary translation's process and products.
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 509, GSWS 509, JWST 509, YDSH 509
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 511 Stylistics
Textual analysis based on communication theory. Texts selected from literature and other disciplines. Emphasis placed on the development of the student's own compositional and stylistic skills.
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: GRMN 221
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 516 Teaching Methods
This course examines major foreign language methodologies, introduces resources available to foreign language teachers, and addresses current issues and concerns of foreign language teaching and learning, such as second language acquisition theory and application of technology.
Taught by: Frei
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Although the starting point for the Anthropocene is still under discussion, there is broad agreement that the industrial revolution and the turn to fossil fuels mark an intensification of humanity’s impact on the Earth. It may not be a coincidence that Kant’s proclamation of the Copernican revolution in philosophy, according to which human reason replaces the natural light of traditional metaphysics, falls roughly in the same period. Human finite cognition became the measure for God and his creation. The dawn of the era of human freedom and the ramped up exploitation of resources coincide. It is against this background that the Naturphilosophie of F. W. J. Schelling can become particularly interesting. The genesis of German idealism is closely related with the opposition between freedom and necessity that lies at the heart of Kant’s critical project. Kant associated the former with man and the latter with nature. In trying to bridge the gap between them, Schelling reinstates nature as an autonomous actor in its own right. Schelling’s thinking about nature chimes with the literary and empirical-scientific work of his contemporary Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In the productive interplay of poetry, science, religion, and philosophical thought, Goethe and Schelling offer a critical alternative to philosophy in the aftermath of the Copernican revolution that may be viable or useful today as humanity tries to come to terms with anthropogenically induced climate change. This co-taught interdisciplinary seminar will focus on works by Schelling (Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature, First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature, On the World Soul) and Goethe (scientific writings, Faust I & II), in addition to engaging recent scholarship of Schelling and Goethe in relation to environmental humanities.
Taught by: Richter/Hahmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 547, PHIL 567
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 526 The Trouble with Freud: Psychoanalysis, Literature, Culture
For professionals in the field of mental care, Freud’s work is often regarded as outdated, if not problematic psychologists view his work as non-scientific, dependent on theses that cannot be confirmed by experiments. In the realm of literary and cultural theory, however, Freud’s work seems to have relevance still, and is cited often. How do we understand the gap between a medical/scientific reading of Freud’s work, and a humanist one? Where do we locate Freud’s relevance today? The graduate course will concentrate on Freud’s descriptions of psychoanalytic theory and practice, as well as his writings on literature and culture. Prerequisite: Readings and discussions in English.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 523, GSWS 525
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 527 Philosophy of Psychology
An investigation of issues that arise from scientific psychology and are investigated philosophically or have implications for philosophy. Specific topics vary by semester. In Spring 2019 the seminar will examine various instances of appealing to appearances in analyzing perception and its relation to an external world. Authors to be studied include Descartes, Hume, Russell, Sellars, and Chisholm.
Taught by: Hatfield
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 526
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 534 History of Literary Theory
Over the last three decades, the fields of literary and cultural studies have been reconfigured by a variety of theoretical and methodological developments. Bracing-and-often confrontational-dialogues between theoretical and political positions as varied as Deconstruction, New Historicism, Cultural Materialism, Feminism, Queer Theory, Minority Discourse Theory, Colonial and Post-colonial Studies and Cultural Studies have, in particular, altered disciplinary agendas and intellectual priorities for students embarking on the /professional / study of literature. In this course, we will study key texts, statements and debates that define these issues, and will work towards a broad knowledge of the complex rewriting of the project of literary studies in process today. The reading list will keep in mind the Examination List in Comparative Literature. We will not work towards complete coverage but will ask how crucial contemporary theorists engage with the longer history and institutional practices of literary criticism. There will be no examinations. Students will make one class presentation, which will then be reworked into a paper (1200-1500 words) to be submitted one week after the presentation. A second paper will be an annotated bibliography on a theoretical issue or issues that a student wishes to explore further. The bibliography will be developed in consultation with the instructor; it will typically include three or four books and six to eight articles or their equivalent. The annotated bibliography will be prefaced by a five or six page introduction; the whole will add up to between 5000 and 6000 words of prose. Students will prepare “position notes” each week, which will either be posted on a weblog or circulated in class.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CLST 511, COML 501, ENGL 601, REES 500
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 535 The Elemental Turn
The unfolding effects of climate change—rising sea level, melting ice sheets, subsiding land masses, drought stricken regions, wild fires, air laden with greenhouse gases, and inundated cities—heighen our awareness of the elements: air, earth, fire and water. Within the context of the new materialism, philosophers, eco-critics, and writers are re-turning to the elements and encountering, at the same time, predecessor texts that assume new relevance. This seminar will place current thinking and writing about the elements into dialogue with older traditions ranging from the classical (Empedocles, Plato, Lucretius) to writers and thinkers of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g., Goethe, Novalis, Tieck, Stifter, Bachelard, Heidegger, Boehme).
Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 543
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 537 Translating Literature: Theory and Practice
Taught by: Hellerstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 519, JWST 537
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 541 Topics in Cultural History
Topic for Spring 2016: Making and Marking Time. What is time? In the late 19th century, the questions of how to define time, how to slow down time, and, above all, how to accelerate movement have become focus of the work by many European philosophers who have tried to come to terms with what is now termed as the Industrial Revolution, and the idea of “progress.” And can time be understood as something continuous, or is it fragmented, proceeding in fits and burst? Such contemplations on time have deeply influenced writers. Marcel Proust was a reader of Henri Bergson and translated his theories of time into a concept of memory. Thomas Mann has tried to navigate timelessness in a novel set on a “Magic Mountain.” Virginia Woolf and James Joyce have pictured an entire universe in a single day (Mrs. Dalloway, Ulysses) while early 20th century Italian Futurists made the contemplation of time part of their manifestos. With them, and with expressionist writers in Germany or writers from the DADA movement there elsewhere in Europe, a reckoning with time would also influence their choice of genre and form, writerly practice, and technique. Parallel to these literary experimentation, pictures were set into motion in scholarly studies by Eadweard Muybridge and finally in the new medium film; Impressionist painters insisted on picturing fleeting moments, and composers experimented with temporal sequences. We may be able to understand a reconsideration of time as driving force for the modern movement, or simply “modernity.” In this seminar, we will study a selection of literary texts of the late 19th century and the modernist movement, consider the philosophical background and changes in historiography, and integrate a consideration of the visual arts and music.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 584, COML 537, ENGL 563
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 542 Topics in Culture.
Topics vary annually.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 542
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 543 Environmental Humanities: Theory, Method, Practice
Environmental Humanities: Theory, Methods, Practice is a seminar-style course designed to introduce students to the trans- and interdisciplinary field of environmental humanities. Weekly readings and discussions will be complemented by guest speakers from a range of disciplines including ecology, atmospheric science, computing, history of science, medicine, anthropology, literature, and the visual arts. Participants will develop their own research questions and a final project, with special consideration given to building the multi-disciplinary collaborative teams research in the environmental humanities often requires.
Taught by: Wiggin
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 544, ENGL 643, ENVS 543, SPAN 543
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 544 Public Environmental Humanities
This broadly interdisciplinary course is designed for Graduate and Undergraduate Fellows in the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities (PPEH) who hail from departments across Arts and Sciences as well as other schools at the university. The course is also open to others with permission of the instructors. Work in environmental humanities by necessity spans academic disciplines. By design, it can also address and engage publics beyond traditional academic settings. This seminar, with limited enrollment, explores best practices in public environmental humanities. Students receive close mentoring to develop and execute cross-disciplinary, public engagement projects on the environment.
Taught by: Wiggin
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ANTH 543, COML 562, ENVS 544, URBS 544
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 545 Reading Benjamin Reading Kafka
Readings and discussions in English. Walter Benjamin's study of the works of Franz Kafka is as enlightening as it can be bewildering. Moving from philology to Marxism, metaphysics to messianism, Daoism to Talmud, this densely argued piece elliptically touches on almost all of Kafka's published works in just four short sections. This seminar proposes a line-by-line reading Benjamin's 1934 "Franz Kafka on the Tenth Anniversary of His Death" with an eye to its literary, philosophical and religious contexts as well as to the rich history of its intellectual reception. Reading Kafka's works as the essay evokes them, we will situate this piece with regard to Benjamin's other writings, the essay's interlocutors (Brod, Scholem, Lukacs, Brecht) and its most illustrious interpreters (Adorno, Arendt, Celan, Hamacher).
Taught by: Fleishman
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 565, JWST 565
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 547 Writing in Dark Times: German Literature in the Nazi Era
The rise of Hitler and the Nazis in 1933 radically disrupted the literary marketplace in Germany. Public book burnings were the most visible sign of a complete reorganization of the literary world. What was it like to be a writer in the Third Reich? How did censorship work? What kind of choices were writers forced to make? What political roles did writers adopt? Under what conditions could they publish? Who read their books and how did they read them? These are some of the questions we will ask as we become acquainted with German writers in ideological adherence or alliance, in exile throughout Europe and the Americas, in "inner emigration," even in concentration camps, and in hiding. By focusing on their writing, we will shed light on the value of literature in dark times.
Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 323
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

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GRMN 550 German Film History and Analysis
From the early 20th century, German cinema has played a key role in the history of film. Seminar topics may include: Weimar cinema, film in the Nazi period, East German film, the New German cinema, and feminist film. Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CIMS 259, COML 261, GRMN 259
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 551 Kant I
The course will concentrate on the Critique of Pure Reason and discuss in detail Kant’s conception of knowledge and experience, his criticism of traditional metaphysics and the resulting project of a system of transcendental philosophy. Taught by: Horstmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 465
Prerequisite: PHIL 004
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 552 Kant II
A study of Kant's moral philosophy, political philosophy, and aesthetics, focusing on his Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, Critique of Practical Reason, Metaphysics of Morals, and Critique of Judgement. Taught by: Horstmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 466
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 555 Topics in Dutch Studies
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 532, DTCH 530
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 556 What is Enlightenment?
The question "What is the Enlightenment?" was posed for an essay competition in a journal, the Berlin Monatsschrift in 1784. At that point, French and English philosophers had already considered new ways of thinking, inventing the modern individual and the modern citizen (in contrast to a state's subject). German responses to this question were written by an established philosopher (Immanuel Kant), a Jewish resident of Berlin (Moses Mendelssohn), as well as concerned readers of recent philosophical treatises. In our course, we will consider this question by exploring this early discussion and the formation of Enlightenment thought in Europe and specifically Germany, including the German-Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah), but also trace the historical transformation of this discussion, including Theodor W. Adorno's and Max Horkheimer's Dialectics of Enlightenment (1944/1947) and more recent criticism. Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 557 Reading the Twentieth Century
Taught by: MacLeod
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 558 The Long Nineteenth Century: Literature, Philosophy, Culture
The present course will discuss German literature and thought from the period of the French Revolution to the turn of the twentieth century, and put it into a European context. In regard to German literature, this is the period that leads from the Storm and Stress and Romanticism to the political period of the Vormarz, Realism, and finally Expressionism; in philosophy, it moves from German Idealism to the philosophy of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and neo-Kantian thought. It is also the period that saw the rise of the novel, and new forms of dramatic works. Painting moved out of the studio into plein air; the invention of photography made an imprint on all arts, and the rise of the newspaper led to new literary genres such as the feuilleton. Economically, Germany experienced the industrial revolution; politically, it was striving for a unification that was finally achieved in 1871. The nineteenth century saw the establishment of the bourgeoisie, the emergence of the German working class, and the idea of the nation state; it also saw Jewish emancipation, and the call for women's rights. Readings will focus on a variety of literary, political, and philosophical texts; and consider a selection of art works. Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 777, COML 566
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 560 Topics in Philosophy and Literature
Topics vary annually.
Taught by: Chignell
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 561 The Long Eighteenth Century
The aim of this anchor course is to acquaint students with the literary, philosophical, and cultural complexity of the "long eighteenth century," roughly 1648-1806. Often associated with the enlightenment and the revolutions it inspired, the eighteenth century is a prolonged period in which institutions of power and knowledge come under pressure and are reconfigured. Old institutions are submitted to the critique of reason, while new institutions of governance, sociability, gender, race and class create new spaces for cultural production. Students will analyze representative works in context and in combination with current scholarship. Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 562 Early Modernism
Topics vary annually.
Taught by: Wiggin, Frei, Hahmann
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
**GRMN 567 Topics in History of Philosophy**
Topics change annually. Topic title for Spring 2016 is: Schiller’s Philosophical Writings. Today Friedrich Schiller is primarily known for his dramas and poems. However, during a period of several years (after he was appointed professor of History in Jena) he was also concerned with philosophical issues. The focus was mainly on questions of aesthetics and philosophy of history. With regard to both, it was Kant who was extremely influential for the development of Schiller’s philosophical position. But Schiller did not simply copy or rearrange Kantian ideas, in fact, he evolved Kantian philosophy significantly in numerous respects. And even though Schiller later gave up with his philosophical ambitions—in a letter he even dismissed his philosophical efforts altogether as immature—his specific understanding of Kantian philosophy became extremely influential for the genesis of German idealism in general, but in particular shaped the reception of Kantian ideas by Hegel. In this seminar we will look at Schiller’s most important philosophical writings and address both his conception of aesthetics and his approach to philosophy of history.

Taught by: Hahmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 467
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

**GRMN 569 New German Fiction**
Our seminar will deal with contemporary German culture. What do German readers read? We will read nine novels that were published recently. While considering newspaper accounts of these books and their authors, we will try to come to our own judgments regarding the quality of these works, and their lasting impact. Instead of term papers, we will write book reviews—and all members of the seminar will be asked to review all the books in question. Prerequisite: Course taught in German.

Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: GRMN 203
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

**GRMN 572 Materialism**
How do we recognize materialism? This seminar poses this question by acknowledging “materialism” as a contested category with disparate and contradictory historical meanings: as a synonym for dogmatism, as the arch-enemy of reason and morality, as the scientific philosophy of the revolutionary workers’ movement, as an alternative to (idealist) metaphysics, as a poetic practice, or as a central concern for material nature and environment, among others. Less concerned with enumerating philosophical systems, we will search out “family resemblances” and materialist tendencies among a wide range of texts. To this end, we will not only read the major historical texts of the so-called materialists (from Lucretius to Spinoza, from La Mettrie to Lenin), but also engage with materialism’s supposed critics and antagonists (from Plato to Kant and Hegel). A special emphasis will be placed on the attempts to recuperate materialism as a positive category in recent critical theory and continental philosophy, for example, in the reinventions of Marxist and Spinozist traditions. We will also survey the attempts that found new traditions, such as aleatory materialism or various new materialisms. By reading exemplary literary texts that engage with the problem of materialism the seminar will also ask: can one speak of materialist poetics?

Taught by: Biareishyk
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 583
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 574 Politics and Societies in the Early Modern World
In this seminar, we will discuss how early modern globalization affected societies and the ways their members and rulers made politics. Following a historiographical introduction, it is divided in three sections. In the first, we will concentrate on empires and kings in order to detect common features of dynastic power across the globe and to explore how such characteristics influenced each other. Second, we will shift our attention to citizens and the ways they made politics in their city-states. For a long time, research on citizenship has been confined to the post-revolutionary nation states. However, recent research suggests that urban citizenship has far deeper roots in medieval and early modern cities. Up to now most research has focused on urban centers in Western Europe and more precisely on the so-called urban belt stretching from Central and North-Italy, over Switzerland and Southern Germany to the Rhineland and the Low Countries. Comparisons with urban centers in Asia and the colonial Americas will be needed to test that view. In the third section, we will study the people who provided information to societies and decision makers. Often, they held multiple identities or they acted as religious or ethnic outsiders. Therefore, we call them, with a term borrowed from anthropology ‘brokers’. Taken together, the analysis of these aspects will deepen our understanding of politics and societies in the globalizing early modern world. Thus, the seminar will contribute to a more comprehensive, less Europe-centered view on that period.
Taught by: Cools
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: DTCH 574, HIST 575
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 578 Topics in Northern Renaissance
Topic varies from semester to semester. For the Fall 2020 semester, the topic will be: Privacy and Society. Dutch Painting in the Seventeenth Century. How do paintings offer occasions for personal reflection, and how do they construct social bonds? The burgeoning art market of the Dutch Golden Age offered both new forms of intimacy—inviting the beholder into domestic interiors to observe the events of everyday life—and public statements about leadership, social structures, and national identity. Freed from the patronage of churches and courts, Dutch artists produced pictures that could be purchased for the home—landscapes, moralizing genre scenes, still lifes, and portraits. They also made paintings for public spaces such as guild halls and charitable organizations, which map the relationships between members of civic organizations. The aim of this course is to develop a set of critical skills for analyzing the different ways in which seventeenth-century Dutch paintings drew upon shared social values, national identity and economic pride, how they appealed to individual buyer tastes, and how they have engaged and poetic minds. We will address these matters in a focused study of the exhibition at the Arthur Ross Gallery, An Inner World: Seventeenth-Century Dutch Genre Painting, which gathers together works of artists such as Gerrit Dou, Gabriel Metsu, Dominicus van Tol, Willem van Mieris, and Jacob Toorenvliet from the Leiden Collection in New York, the Clark Art Institute, as well as printed books and manuscripts from the Kislak Center. Along with a trip to New York to study drawings and paintings from the period, we will also engage closely with objects at the Philadelphia Museum of Art—both on view and off. In writing assignments, we will attend to the representation of space, considering domestic interiors, urban settings, church architecture, imperial arenas, and landscapes both real and imagined.
Taught by: Brisman
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 561
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 580 Topics In Aesthetics
Topic title for Spring 2018: Walter Benjamin. Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) is a philosopher whose writings on art, literature, and politics have had tremendous influence on many disciplines in the Humanities and Social Studies. He has been variously described as one of the leading German-Jewish thinkers, and a secular Marxist theorist. With the publication of a four-volume collection of this works in English, many more of his writings have been made accessible to a wider public. Our seminar will undertake a survey of his work that begins with his studies on language and allegory, and continues with his autobiographical work, his writings on art and literature, and on the imaginary urban spaces of the nineteenth-century.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 560, COML 582, JWST 582, PHIL 480
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 581 Topics in Jewish History
Reading and discussion course on selected topics in Jewish history. The instructors are visiting scholars at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies. Topic and seminar title for Spring 2015: Topics in Jewish Studies: The Origins of Jewish Studies. Course description for Spring 2015: This is a reading course that grants seminar participants access to Katz Center fellows, some of the best scholars in Judaic studies around the world. The aim of the course is to expose students to these scholars and their work, to get to know them as people, learn from them at high level, and understand their approach to the field. Over the course of the spring semester there will be four 3-session modules. Students will meet with 4 different fellows for 3 sessions each. The weekly 90-minute classes will be held at the Katz Center on Wednesdays from 10:30 am - 12 pm, and participants will be encouraged to then stay for lunch and the fellows' seminar which runs from 12:30 - 2:30 pm.
Taught by: Spring 2015: Liliane Weissberg and Steven Weitzman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 582 Topics in Political Science
Topics vary annually.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PSCI 588
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 583 Topics in German Philosophy
Topics vary annually.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 468
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 603 Seminar in German Literature
Topics range from the study of individual authors to analyses of major texts.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 605 Modern Literary Theory and Criticism
This course will provide an overview of major European thinkers in critical theory of the 20th and 21st centuries. We will pay particular attention to critical currents that originated in Eastern European avant-garde and early socialist contexts and their legacies and successors. Topics covered will include: Russian Formalism and its successors in Structuralism and Deconstruction (Shklovsky, Levi-Strauss, Jakobson, Derrida); Bakhtin and his circle, dialogism and its later western reception; debates over aesthetics and politics of the 1930s (Lukacs, Brecht, Adorno, Benjamin, Radek, Clement Greenberg); the October group; Marxism, new Left criticism, and later lefts (Althusser, Williams, Eagleton, Jameson, Zizek).
Taught by: Platt
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: COML 605, ENGL 605, FREN 605, REES 605
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 612 Hannah Arendt: Politics-Philosophy-Literature
The seminar will consider Hannah Arendt's early Jewish writings. It will then center on Arendt's major work, The Origins of Totalitarianism (in particular, the sections on "Antisemitism" and "Imperialism"). Finally, we will discuss Arendt's controversial study on Eichmann in Jerusalem.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 612, JWST 612
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 614 Weimar Landscapes
This new course is designed for students of literature, landscape architecture and urban planning, and cultural history in general. It will explore the ideas of, and attitudes towards, landscape in selected works by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, and consider his own considerable practical involvement in reshaping the town and gardens of Weimar. The course will provide the larger context of German literature, aesthetics and landscape taste, and politics of the later 18th and early 19th centuries. We will consider the development of new gardens and parks in a "new" style (e.g. Woerlitz); they were regarded to be less formal and more "natural" than their French predecessors. We will study the English models for this movement, and offer a particular attention to the major German theorist, C.C.L.: Hirschfeld, who would soon become famous outside Germany as well. Students will be expected (but not required) to read in German. Translations of key works by Goethe, as well as of commentaries on German gardening history, are available to ensure that non-German speakers can readily follow the course. In final papers there will be the freedom to select topics that focus upon literary or landscape architecture, though it is anticipated that a comparativist perspective will be adopted in either approach.
Taught by: Weissberg/Hunt
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 782, COML 615, ENGL 584, URBS 614
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 628 Topics 18th Century, vary annually.
Topic for Fall 2014 is: Wolfgang's Lehrjahre (1765-1774) The decade before the publication of Goethe's Die Leiden des jungen Werthers is full of literary ferment. The goal of this course is to gain a sense of the multiplicity of projects and perspectives in this crucial decade in order to break down any teleology that might see Werther as its crowning triumph. In other words, this is a course in the "politics" of literature and literary aesthetics. Works to be read, discussed, and reported on include: Kant, Beobachtungen uber das Gefuehl des Schoenen und Erhabenen; Klopstock, Salomo, ein Trauerspiel; Gleim, Lieder nach dem Anakreon; Herder, Fragmente uber die neueren deutschen Literatur; Lessing, Laokoon oder ber die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie; Wieland, Geschichte des Agathon; Lessing, Minna von Barnhelm; Mendelssohn, Phaedon oder ber die Unsterblichkeit der Seele; von Gerstenberg, Ugolino; Wieland, Musarion; Klopstock, Oden und Elegien; La Roche, Geschichte des Fraeuleins von Sternheim; Herder, Abhandlung uben den Ursprung der Sprache; Lavater, Von der Physiognomik; Lessing, Emilia Galotti; Goethe, Goetz von Berlichingen mit der eiserne Hand; Herder, Von deutscher Art und Kunst; Nicolai, Sebaldis Nothanker; Wieland, Alceste; Zimmerman, Von der Einsamkeit; Blankenburg, Versuch uber den Roman, and, of course, Werther.
Taught by: Richter
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 632 Romanticism
The course focuses both on the timely impact and the lasting contribution of Romanticism. Lectures cover the philosophical, intellectual, social, and political currents of the age. Authors: Schlegel, Wackenroder, Tieck, Brentano, Arnim, Novalis, Hoffmann, Kleist, Eichendorff.
Taught by: MacLeod, Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 642 Drama of the Twentieth Century
Based on a discussion of the relationship of drama (text) and theater (performance), the course examines the development of realistic and antirealistic currents in modern German drama. From Wedekind and Expressionism to Piscator's political theater, Brecht's epic theater and beyond (Horvath, Fleisser, Frisch, Duerrenmatt, Handke).
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 651 Studies in 17th Century
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 657 Becoming Modern: The German-Jewish Experience
Yuri Slezkine described the twentieth century as a "Jewish Age"—to be modern would essentially mean to be a Jew. In German historical and cultural studies, this linkage has long been made—only in reference to the last years of the German monarchy and the time of the Weimar Republic. Indeed, what has become known as "modern" German culture—reflected in literature, music, and the visual arts and in a multitude of public media—has been more often than not assigned to Jewish authorship or Jewish subjects. But what do authorship and subject mean in this case? Do we locate the German-Jewish experience as the driving force of this new "modernity", or is our understanding of this experience the result of this new "modern" world?
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 657, JWST 657
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 677 The Life of Forms: Ontogenesis, Morphology, Literature
In recent years, the notions of form, formalism, and morphology have reentered contemporary debates across the humanities. This seminar considers the current resurgence of interest in form by tracing form's evolving concepts throughout modernity. It departs from the observation that experimentation with and debates on form in art and literature are inextricably linked to various notions of life and the living. These debates—this is the provisional thesis of the seminar—are the battlefield where literary and art criticism undermine the major presuppositions of the western metaphysical tradition (e.g., determinations of inside-outside, form-content, living-inorganic). On the other hand, the seminar will explore a selective genealogy of various attempts to dynamize the concept of form through theories of 1) ontogenesis (e.g., Spinoza, Simondon, Malabou), 2) morphology (e.g., Goethe, Propp, Goldstein), and 3) aesthetics (e.g., Baumgarten, Schlegel brothers, Adorno). On the other hand, in order to investigate the political, ideological, and methodological implications of differing concepts of form, the seminar will bring together texts from different disciplines, including literary studies (literary morphology, Russian Formalism), art history (Focillon, Kubler), philosophy (Wittgenstein, Macherey). On the other hand, in order to investigate the political, ideological, and methodological implications of differing concepts of form, the seminar will bring together texts from different disciplines ranging from literary studies (e.g., Jolles, Russian Formalism, Jauss), art history (e.g., Panofsky, Focillon, Kubler), philosophy (e.g., Wittgenstein, Blumenberg, Macherey), history of science (e.g., Vygotsky, Varela), and sociology (e.g., Tarde, DeLanda). Finally, the seminar will engage in close reading of exemplary literary and art works, and situate the findings on the conjunction of form and life in current debates on New Formalisms (e.g., Levine, Levinson, Kornbluh) and New Materialisms (e.g., Bennett, Grosz).
Taught by: Biareishyk
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 677
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 678 Realism: Literature and Theory
What is "realism"? What does it mean to depict the world as a "realist" writer or artist? This seminar will consider these questions and concentrate on German literature and art of the second half of the nineteenth century. It will focus on writers such as Stifter, Storm, Raabe, and Fontane; but also on Stifter's drawings and paintings, visual artists such as Menzel, and the vogue of historical painting. Finally, the seminar will consider the role of early photography in the development of the notion of "realism." Secondary literature will include studies by Michael Fried, Linda Nochlin, and others.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 683 Topics in Philosophy
Topics vary
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
GRMN 684 Topics in Philosophy.
This seminar explores political thought in Germany from the Imperial state of the early 20th century through its fragmentation and division and into the reunification of east and west Germany in 1992. Much of this period was "after idealism" philosophically and politically, the preface to pessimism and "the passing of political philosophy" as articulated in the Enlightenment (Shklar), but fascinating period of thought and argument. Among our texts are Habermas (philosophy), Weber (sociology), Schmitt (law), Juenger (literature) & their contemporaries. Students are not expected to read texts in the original, although having German will greatly expand your range and the depth of your reading.
Taught by: Kennedy
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 684
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

GRMN 700 Research Workshop
GRMN Ph.D. requirement
Taught by: MacLeod and Richter
Activity: Seminar
0.5 Course Units

GRMN 701 Pedagogy Roundtable
GRMN Ph.D. requirement
Taught by: Frei
Activity: Seminar
0.5 Course Units