

Northwestern University  
***PHD PROGRAM***

# GERMAN LITERATURE AND CRITICAL THOUGHT

The Department of German Literature and Critical Thought offers a graduate program that focuses on the theoretical and cultural foundations for the development of German literature, critical thought, and media from 1750 onward. In order to acquire these foundations, students take a two-year sequence of six required (core) and twelve elective courses. Students are encouraged to choose electives in related disciplines such as art history, comparative literary studies, film studies, French/Italian, history, philosophy, Slavic, and Spanish, as well as in the German Department.

Applicants should contact the program or see the departmental website in order to learn about program-specific requirements for admission.

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## Program Description

### Faculty

Professors:	Peter Hayes (Chair), Peter D. Fenves, Helmut H. Müller-Sievers, Rainer Rumold, Samuel Weber
Associate Professors:	Franziska Lys, Marcus Moseley
Assistant Professors:	Stefanie Harris, Jörg Kreienbrock
Senior Lecturers:	Denise Meuser, John Paluch, Ingrid Zeller
Joint Appointments:	Peter Hayes (History), Alex Weheliye (English), Linda Zerilli (Political Science)

### PhD Coursework Requirements

Courses		Units
<b>Core Courses</b>		
GERMAN 401	German Literature and Critical Thought, 1750-1832	1
GERMAN 402	German Literature and Critical Thought, 1832-1900	1
GERMAN 403	German Literature, Critical Thought, and New Media, 1900-45	1
GERMAN 404	German Literature, Critical Thought, and New Media since 1945	1
GERMAN 405	Basic Issues in Foreign Language Teaching	1
GERMAN 406	Contours of German History since 1750	1

<b>Electives: Twelve courses from those listed below and related disciplines</b>	12
GERMAN 322 German Contributions to World Literature	
GERMAN 324 Modern German Drama	
GERMAN 431 Contemporary German Literature	
GERMAN 441 Studies in Communication and Culture	
GERMAN 490 Independent Reading	
GERMAN 499 Independent Research	
GERMAN 590 Research	

**Total required units:** 18

### Other PhD Degree Requirements

- *Graduate Colloquium*: participation in seminars and workshops under this rubric during all quarters in residence
- *Examinations*: comprehensive examination for admission to candidacy
- *Research/Projects*: extensive research papers related to seminar topics
- *PhD Dissertation*: original independent research
- *Final Evaluations*: oral defense of the dissertation

### Course Descriptions

**GERMAN 322 German Contributions to World Literature (1)** Investigation of literary texts from diverse genres and periods which are marked by a sense of constraint apparently at odds with the view associated with Western modernity of the individual as the locus of freedom and autonomy. The “German contribution” as a somber corrective to Enlightenment optimism.

**GERMAN 324 Modern German Drama (1)** Modern drama of the German stage as a “moral institution,” as defined by Friedrich Schiller and echoed by Erwin Piscator. Works by authors ranging from Heinrich von Kleist to Peter Weiss.

**GERMAN 401 German Literature and Critical Thought, 1750-1832 (1)** This course begins with the formative aesthetic discussions undertaken by Lessing and Mendelssohn, turns to Kant’s program for critical self-reflection, and considers a wide range of responses, including those of Schiller, the early romantics, Kleist, Hölderlin, and Goethe.

**GERMAN 402 German Literature and Critical Thought, 1832-1900 (1)** Thematic approach to key texts of 19<sup>th</sup> century German literature between Goethe and Gottfried Keller, tragedy and the Bildungsroman. Literary and philosophical texts are read side by side in order to interrogate traditional concepts of realism, mimesis, and interpretation.

**GERMAN 403 German Literature, Critical Thought, and New Media, 1900-45 (1)** Built around selected key texts on the aesthetic theories of modernism (e.g., by Nietzsche, Adorno, Bürger, and Kittler), this course explores the relationship of literature and the visual arts and scrutinizes the status of literature within aesthetic production in modernity. Particular attention to works by Rilke, Kafka, Brecht, Lasker-Schüler, Benn, Musil, and Mann.

**GERMAN 404 German Literature, Critical Thought, and New Media since 1945 (1)** Overview of the most influential texts that reflect the mounting concern with media in German literary and critical theory since the Second World War. Emphasis on the effects of the rise of media studies and theory on the understanding and interpretation of literature.

**GERMAN 405 Basic Issues in Foreign Language Teaching: Theory and Practical**

**Applications (1)** This course focuses on basic principles of second language acquisition and language teaching methodology. It introduces students to the major trends and theories in language teaching. The critical reflection of pedagogical practices is emphasized.

**GERMAN 406 Contours of German History since 1750 (1)** Partly thematic and partly chronological approach to familiarizing graduate students with the social and cultural contexts of major intellectual and literary developments. Focus on the end of the early modern order, industrialization, urbanization, unification, utopianism, expansionism, the burden of the National Socialist past, and the vexed question of national identity.

**GERMAN 431 Contemporary German Literature (1)** Readings from authors representative of literature in the former East and West Germany's. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

**GERMAN 441 Studies in Communication and Culture (1)** Content varies. Samples; feminist literature, media studies, the history of literary journals, and other specific topics representative of current research interests. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

**GERMAN 490 Independent Reading (1)** May be repeated for credit. Permission of instructor and department required.

**GERMAN 499 Independent Study (1)** May be repeated for credit. Permission of instructor and department required.

**GERMAN 590 Research (1)** Independent investigation of selected problems pertaining to dissertation. Permission of instructor and department required. May be repeated for credit.