

GERMANIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

Humanities Quadrangle, 203.432.0788

<http://german.yale.edu>

M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair

Paul North

Directors of Graduate Studies

Kirk Wetters

Professors Rüdiger Campe, Fatima Naqvi, Paul North, Sophie Schweiger, Kirk Wetters

Affiliated faculty Jennifer Allen (*History*), Thomas Connolly (*French*), Fatima El-Tayeb (*Ethnicity, Race and Migration; Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies*), Paul Franks (*Philosophy*), Gundula Kreuzer (*Music; Theater and Performance Studies*), John Peters (*English; Film and Media*), Steven Smith (*Political Science*), David Sorkin (*History*), Nicola Suthor (*History of Art*), Katie Trumpener (*Comparative Literature; English; Film and Media*)

FIELDS OF STUDY

German literature and culture from the Middle Ages to the twenty-first century in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland; literary and cultural theory; literature and philosophy; literature and science; media history and theory; visuality and German cinema.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

The faculty in German considers teaching to be essential to the professional preparation of graduate students. Four terms of teaching are required, usually beginning in the third year of study. Students normally teach undergraduate language courses under supervision for at least three terms. Other teaching experiences are available thereafter in literature, theory, film, etc.

Students are required to demonstrate, besides proficiency in German, a reading knowledge of one other foreign language in the third term of study.

In the first two years of study, students take four courses per term. Of these sixteen courses, one must be GMAN 501, Methods of Teaching German as a World Language; and at least one must be taken in pre-nineteenth-century topics. Three of the sixteen courses in the first four terms may be audited.

A written examination must be taken at the end of the fifth term of study, followed by an oral discussion approximately a week after the written exam. A dissertation prospectus should be submitted no later than the end of the sixth term. All students will be asked to defend the prospectus in a discussion with the faculty. The defense will take place before the prospectus is officially approved, usually in late April or May of the sixth term. Students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus. Candidates who wish to write

the dissertation in a language other than English, in this case in German, should notify the DGS at the prospectus defense.

After the submission of the prospectus, the student's time is devoted mainly to the preparation of the dissertation. A dissertation committee will be set up for each student at work on the dissertation. It is expected that students will periodically pass their work along to members of their committee, so that faculty members in addition to the dissertation adviser can make suggestions well before the dissertation is submitted. Drafts of each chapter must be submitted in a timely fashion to all members of the student's committee: the first chapter should be submitted to the committee by February 1 of the fourth year of study; the second chapter should be submitted by January 1 of the fifth year. There will be a formal review of the first chapter. After the dissertation is submitted, the DGS convenes a defense colloquium with the candidate, the committee, the department, and invited guests.

Two concentrations are available to graduate students: Germanic Literature and German Studies. There is a special combined degree with Film and Media Studies; see below.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GERMANIC LITERATURE CONCENTRATION

During the first two years of study, students are required to take sixteen term courses, four of which may be taken outside the department. Three courses may be audited.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GERMAN STUDIES CONCENTRATION

During the first two years of study, students are required to take sixteen term courses, seven of which may be taken outside the department. Three of those courses may be audited. Students are asked to define an area of concentration and will meet with appropriate advisers from both within and outside the department.

COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAM WITH FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures also offers, in conjunction with the Film and Media Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Germanic Languages and Literatures and Film and Media Studies. For further details, see Film and Media Studies. Applicants to the combined program must indicate on their application that they are applying both to Film and Media Studies and to Germanic Languages and Literatures. All documentation within the application should include this information.

MASTER'S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. Students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program may be eligible to receive the M.A. degree if they have met the requirements and have not already received the M.Phil. degree. For the M.A., students must successfully complete eight graduate term courses and demonstrate the knowledge of another foreign language chosen in consultation with the DGS. Candidates in combined programs will be awarded the M.A. only when the master's degree requirements for both programs have been met.

Further information is available upon request to the Registrar, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Yale University, PO Box 208210, New Haven CT 06520-8210; email, german@yale.edu.

COURSES

GMAN 510a, “Sprachkrise” – Philosophies & Language Crises Sophie Schweiger
The crisis of language predates the invention of ChatGPT (who may or may not have helped write this syllabus). This course delves into the concept of language crises and its long history from a philosophical and literary perspective, examining how crises of language are represented in literature and how they reflect broader philosophical questions about language, identity, and power. We explore different philosophical approaches to language, such as the history of language and philology (Herder, Humboldt, Nietzsche), structuralism and post-structuralism (Saussure), analytical and pragmatic philosophies (Wittgenstein), phenomenology and deconstruction (Heidegger), and analyze how these theories shape our understanding of language while simultaneously evoking its crisis. The course also examines how such language crises are represented and produced in literature and the arts, how authors and artists approach the complexities of language loss, and how crises help birth alternative systems of signification. Through close readings of literary texts by Hofmannsthal, Musil, Bachmann, et. al., we analyze the symbolic and metaphorical significance of language crises as well as the ethical and political implications of language loss for (cultural) identity. Experimental use of language such as DaDa artwork, performance cultures, and “Sprachspiel” poetry by the “Wiener Gruppe,” as well as contemporary KI/AI literature, further complement the theoretical readings. By exploring language crises through the lens of philosophy and literature, we gain a deeper understanding of the role of language – and its many crises – in shaping our understanding of ourselves and our communities.

GMAN 515a / CPLT 547a, Zählen und Erzählen: On the Relation Between Mathematics and Literature Anja Lemke

Mathematical and literary practices of signs have numerous connections, and despite current debates on digital humanities, algorithm and the “end of the book”, the relation between calculus and writing can be traced back to around 3000 BC, when the graphé was split up into figure and character. The seminar explores this relationship by focusing on four different fields, which can be discussed separately but do exhibit numerous overlappings: a) Leibniz’ invention of infinitesimal calculus and its relation to the idea of narration from the Baroque to romanticism through to the twentieth century novel, (b) the relation between probability calculus, statistics, and novel writing in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, (c) the role of cypher for aesthetic and poetic questions starting with Schiller’s *Letters on the esthetic education of men*, to Robert Walser’s *Jakob von Gunten*, and Jenny Erpenbeck’s *The old child*, and (d) the economic impact of computation on poetic concepts, e.g. the role of double entry bookkeeping or models of circulation in romantic theories of money and signs. We discuss Leibniz’ *Theodizee*, texts on the infinitesimal calculus and his concept of an ars combinatoria, novels like *The Fortunatus*, Novalis’s *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, Stifter’s “The gentle law”, Gustav Freytag’s *Debit and Credit*, and Musil’s *Man without content*, Novalis’s notes on mathematical questions of his time, and economic texts such as Adam Müller’s *Attempt on a theory of money*.

GMAN 531a / CPLT 617a, The Short Spring of German Theory Kirk Wetters

Reconsideration of the intellectual microclimate of German academia 1945–1968. A German prelude to the internationalization effected by French theory, often in dialogue with German sources. Following Philipp Felsch's *The Summer of Theory* (English 2022): Theory as hybrid and successor to philosophy and sociology. Theory as the genre of the philosophy of history and grand narratives (e.g. secularization). Theory as the basis of academic interdisciplinarity and cultural-political practice. The canonization and aging of theoretical classics. Critical reflection on academia now and then. Legacies of the inter-War period and the Nazi past: M. Weber, Heidegger, Husserl, Benjamin, Kracauer, Adorno, Jaspers. New voices of the 1950s and 1960s: Arendt, Blumenberg, Gadamer, Habermas, Jauss, Koselleck, Szondi, Taubes. German reading and some prior familiarity with European intellectual history will be helpful but not essential.

GMAN 535a / CPLT 663a, Poetics of the Short Form Austen Hinkley

This seminar investigates the rich German tradition of literary short forms, such as the aphorism, the fairy tale, and the joke. Our readings cover small works by major authors from the eighteenth through the early twentieth century, including novellas by Goethe, Kleist, and Droste-Hülshoff; fantastic tales by the Brothers Grimm and Kafka; and short philosophical texts by Lichtenberg, Nietzsche, and Benjamin. We focus on the ways in which short forms not only challenge our understanding of literature and philosophy, but also interact with a wide range of other fields of knowledge like medicine, natural science, law, and history. By considering the possibilities of these mobile and dynamic texts, we explore their power to change how we think about and act in the world. What can be said in an anecdote, a case study, or a novella that could not be said otherwise? How can short forms illuminate the relationship between the literary and the everyday? How might these texts transform our relationship to the short forms that we interact with in our own lives?

GMAN 558b / CPLT 575b / JDST 694b, Georg Lukács: Literature and Politics

Hannan Hever

Lukács is presented through his complex and multifaceted development as a crucial and enigmatic figure, at once a leading Jewish intellectual and perhaps the most important of all twentieth-century Marxist theorists. Following the Second World War, while he was still alive, his legacy had already become polarized in terms of "young Lukács" vs. "old Lukács," East vs. West, romantic vs. realist vs. modernist, revolutionary vs. reactionary. Though Lukács's influence rose and fell in conjunction with the Cold War, key critical terms and methods (such as "reification") survived and are very much a part of current political problems and contemporary critical approaches (e.g., Jameson, Moretti, Honneth).

GMAN 595a / FILM 761a, German Film from 1945 to the Present Fatima Naqvi

We look at a variety of German-language feature films from 1945 to the present in order to focus on issues of trauma, guilt, remembrance (and its counterpart: amnesia), gender, Heimat or "homeland," national and transnational self-fashioning, terrorism, and ethics. How do the Second World War and its legacy infect these films? What sociopolitical and economic factors influence the individual and collective identities that these films articulate? How do the predominant concerns shift with the passage of time and with changing media? How is the category of nation constructed and contested within the narratives themselves? Close attention is paid to the aesthetic issues and the concept of authorship. Films by Staudte, Wolf, Kluge, Radax, Wenders, Fassbinder,

Schroeter, Farocki, Haneke, Petzold, Schanelec, Seidl, Hausner, and Geyrhalter, among others. This class has an optional German section (fifty minutes a week) for students interested in counting this class for the Advanced Language Certificate. A minimum of three students is required for the section to run.

GMAN 604a / CPLT 510a, The Mortality of the Soul: From Aristotle to Heidegger
Martin Hagglund

This course explores fundamental philosophical questions of the relation between matter and form, life and spirit, necessity and freedom, by proceeding from Aristotle's analysis of the soul in *De Anima* and his notion of practical agency in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. We study Aristotle in conjunction with seminal works by contemporary neo-Aristotelian philosophers (Korsgaard, Nussbaum, Brague, and McDowell). We in turn pursue the implications of Aristotle's notion of life by engaging with contemporary philosophical discussions of death that take their point of departure in Epicurus (Nagel, Williams, Scheffler). We conclude by analyzing Heidegger's notion of constitutive mortality, in order to make explicit what is implicit in the form of the soul in Aristotle.

GMAN 617a / CPLT 904a / FILM 617a / FREN 875a / SPAN 901a, Psychoanalysis: Key Conceptual Differences between Freud and Lacan I Moira Fradinger

This is the first section of a year-long seminar (second section: CPLT 914) designed to introduce the discipline of psychoanalysis through primary sources, mainly from the Freudian and Lacanian corpuses but including late twentieth-century commentators and contemporary interdisciplinary conversations. We rigorously examine key psychoanalytic concepts that students have heard about but never had the chance to study. Students gain proficiency in what has been called "the language of psychoanalysis," as well as tools for critical practice in disciplines such as literary criticism, political theory, film studies, gender studies, theory of ideology, psychology, medical humanities, etc. We study concepts such as the unconscious, identification, the drive, repetition, the imaginary, fantasy, the symbolic, the real, and jouissance. A central goal of the seminar is to disambiguate Freud's corpus from Lacan's reinvention of it. We do not come to the "rescue" of Freud. We revisit essays that are relevant for contemporary conversations within the international psychoanalytic community. We include only a handful of materials from the Anglophone schools of psychoanalysis developed in England and the US. This section pays special attention to Freud's "three" (the ego, superego, and id) in comparison to Lacan's "three" (the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real). CPLT 914 devotes, depending on the interests expressed by the group, the last six weeks to special psychoanalytic topics such as sexualization, perversion, psychosis, anti-asylum movements, conversations between psychoanalysis and neurosciences and artificial intelligence, the current pharmacological model of mental health, and/or to specific uses of psychoanalysis in disciplines such as film theory, political philosophy, and the critique of ideology. Apart from Freud and Lacan, we will read work by Georges Canguilhem, Roman Jakobson, Victor Tausk, Émile Benveniste, Valentin Volosinov, Guy Le Gaufey, Jean Laplanche, Étienne Balibar, Roberto Esposito, Wilfred Bion, Félix Guattari, Markos Zafiroopoulos, Franco Bifo Berardi, Barbara Cassin, Renata Salecl, Maurice Godelier, Alenka Zupančič, Juliet Mitchell, Jacqueline Rose, Norbert Wiener, Alan Turing, Eric Kandel, and Lera Boroditsky among others. No previous knowledge of psychoanalysis is needed. Starting out from basic questions, we study how psychoanalysis, arguably, changed the way we think of human subjectivity. Graduate students from all departments and schools on

campus are welcome. The final assignment is due by the end of the spring term and need not necessarily take the form of a twenty-page paper. Taught in English. Materials can be provided to cover the linguistic range of the group.

GMAN 646a / CPLT 646a / EMST 546a / ENGL 723a, Rise of the European Novel

Rudiger Campe and Katie Trumpener

In the eighteenth century, the novel became a popular literary form in many parts of Europe. Yet now-standard narratives of its “rise” often offer a temporally and linguistically foreshortened view. This seminar examines key early modern novels in a range of European languages, centered on the dialogue between highly influential eighteenth-century British and French novels (Montesquieu, Defoe, Sterne, Diderot, Laclos, Edgeworth). We begin by considering a sixteenth-century Spanish picaresque life history (Lazarillo de Tormes) and Madame de Lafayette’s seventeenth-century secret history of French court intrigue; contemplate a key sentimental Goethe novella; and end with Romantic fiction (an Austen novel, a Kleist novella, Pushkin’s historical novel fragment). These works raise important issues about cultural identity and historical experience, the status of women (including as readers and writers), the nature of society, the vicissitudes of knowledge – and novelistic form. We also examine several major literary-historical accounts of the novel’s generic evolution, audiences, timing, and social function, and historiographical debates about the novel’s rise (contrasting English-language accounts stressing the novel’s putatively British genesis, and alternative accounts sketching a larger European perspective). The course gives special emphasis to the improvisatory, experimental character of early modern novels, as they work to reground fiction in the details and reality of contemporary life. Many epistolary, philosophical, sentimental, and Gothic novels present themselves as collections of “documents” – letters, diaries, travelogues, confessions – carefully assembled, impartially edited, and only incidentally conveying stories as well as information. The seminar explores these novels’ documentary ambitions; their attempt to touch, challenge, and change their readers; and their paradoxical influence on “realist” conventions (from the emergence of omniscient, impersonal narrators to techniques for describing time and place).

GMAN 683b / CPLT 613b, Historical Fiction Kirk Wetters

Historical narrative between fiction and reality. The tension or possible contradiction between the concepts of history and fiction. Historiography, history writing as a literary genre, biography and biographical fiction (biopic), historical novels, novellas, dramas, and films. Poetics and historiography of the German classical period (Aristotle, Wieland, Schiller, Kleist). Contemporary works of film and literature. Twentieth-century theories of S. Kracauer and Lukács (*The Historical Novel*). Literary works of Schiller (*Wallenstein*), Goethe (*Torquato Tasso*), W. Scott (*Waverley*), S. Zweig (historical novellas), Mann (*Death in Venice*), Martin (*Fire and Blood*), Field (*Tár*).

GMAN 701a / CPLT 610a / PLSC 601a / SOCY 701a, Theories of Freedom: Schelling and Hegel Paul North

In 1764 Immanuel Kant noted in the margin of one of his published books that evil was “the subjection of one being under the will of another,” a sign that good was coming to mean freedom. But what is freedom? Starting with early reference to Kant, we study two major texts on freedom in post-Kantian German Idealism, Schelling’s 1809 *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom and Related Objects* and Hegel’s 1820 *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*.