

GERMAN LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION (GELT)

GELT228 Going Green, German-Style: The Relationship to Nature, 1800--Today

Few countries display as active a commitment to protect natural resources and the environment as Germany. Its focus on renewable energies, recycling, and conservation in general is unique even by European standards, and in the U.S., Germany's policies on sustainability and environmental preservation are often held up as models. It is important to recognize, however, that Germans did not achieve this degree of environmental awareness overnight. Rather, it represents the result of centuries of contemplating, controlling, and conserving nature and cannot simply be transferred to other cultures. In this course, we will examine the German (and European) cultural tradition by analyzing artworks and texts from the past two centuries that have both expressed and shaped salient attitudes and emotional responses. The goals of the course are to provide insight into Germany's long and complicated history of defining and relating to nature and to allow you to reflect critically on your own attitudes toward nature and the environment.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-GRST**

Identical With: **GRST228, ENVS228**

Prereq: **None**

GELT230F The Simple Life (FYS)

As the human population grows toward nine billion and our planet's carrying capacity comes under increasing pressure, many observers believe the human project itself is at risk. What human beings have accomplished is probably unique in the history of the universe; once lost to war, famine, and ecological collapse, the understandings and physical creations of our cultures will be irrecoverable.

We must ask ourselves, with considerable urgency, the following questions: How do our values, our economic systems, and our behaviors--as individuals, groups, societies, and cultures--affect the conditions under which we, future generations, and the plants and animals with which we share the earth might live in the future? To what extent and at what cost can technology enable us to adapt to changes already under way? Should we take an "après moi, le déluge" attitude or try to prolong the life of our species, and if so, in what form? Does the so-called simple life, as conceptualized in different times and places, offer any useful models? Does living "green" make sense? What about environmental (in)justice? This course will draw on texts from a variety of periods and disciplines, written in a range of styles and from many perspectives, to examine how these questions and others can be approached. Creative thinking will be strongly encouraged. We will pay particular attention to contemporary sustainability initiatives and threats to the environment in the present moment.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-GRST**

Identical With: **GRST230F, ENVS230F**

Prereq: **None**

GELT239 Modernism and the Total Work of Art

The term "total work of art" refers to the German concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk, which took on new urgency in the 19th century amid social upheaval and revolution. Understood as the intention to reunite the arts into one integrated work, the total work of art was tied from the beginning to the desire to recover and renew the public function of art. While there exist many approaches to totality in the modern era, this course focuses on modernist theories and practices that simultaneously critiqued existing society and posited a utopian alternative. We will begin by studying formulations of totality in

response to a cultural crisis initiated by the 1789 French Revolution. From there, we turn to German idealism and to an analysis of composer Richard Wagner's ideas and compositions that made the idea of the synthesis of the arts a central focus for European modernism. Yet if Wagner's works and writings provided the dominant reference for subsequent developments from the 1880s onward, these most often consisted of a search for alternatives to his own theory and practice, particularly in the visual arts. We will examine attempts to envision totality after Wagner in Impressionist painting and German Expressionism. Ideas of totality and utopia continued to carry positive associations for modern artists until the 1930s, when they became co-opted by totalitarian governments. The course concludes by examining the perversion of modernist dreams in Nazi festivals and art exhibitions.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA339, GRST239, RL&L339, COL349**

Prereq: **None**

GELT253 The New German Cinema

This course will investigate the aesthetics, politics, and cultural context of the new German cinema. Having established a critical vocabulary, we will study the influence of Bertolt Brecht's theoretical writings on theater and film, ambivalent positions vis-à-vis the classic Hollywood cinema, issues of feminist filmmaking, and the thematic preoccupations peculiar to Germany, for example, left-wing terrorism and the Nazi past. Attendant materials will include literary sources, screenplays, and interviews.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-FILM**

Identical With: **FILM320, GRST253**

Prereq: **None**

GELT260 The Agony and the Ecstasy: The German Novel and Novella

Starting with Goethe in the 18th century, German, Austrian, and Swiss authors have made major contributions to the literary genre of the novel and the sub-genre of the novella, typically shorter than a novel and restricted to one plot line. German prose works often grapple with profound philosophical questions, particularly those that bear on the meaning of life, the relation of the individual to society and to other individuals, the character of justice, definitions of ethics and morality, the nature and calling of the artist, and the tension between thought and emotion. In this course we will read, in English translation, longer or shorter works by some of the most significant and enduring authors writing in German between the 18th and 21st centuries. Particular attention will be paid to the portrayal of social and political issues, to narrative strategies and style, and to thematic continuities in the cultures of the German-speaking regions. We will also consider the challenges of translating fiction from one language and culture to another. Several films based on works read in the course will be viewed and analyzed. Ample opportunities will be provided for writing, in both expository and creative veins, and receiving detailed feedback.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-GRST**

Identical With: **GRST260, COL273**

Prereq: **None**

GELT275 Creativity and Crisis: Germany 1918-1933

This course investigates the fascinating culture of the Weimar Republic, Germany's first, heady, and ultimately unsuccessful experience with democracy between the end of the First World War and the Nazis' rise to power. We will focus particularly on Berlin, coming into its own as Germany's first true metropolis, but will also look at Munich, another hub of cultural activity and the

site of Hitler's early organizing activities. Among the topics to be studied may be the increasing influence of film, radio, and the press; modernism in literature; new impulses in art; the economic and social impact of hyperinflation and the Great Depression; changes in the roles of women; assertion of previously taboo gender identities; competing political ideologies; reactions to the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe; the emergence of proletarian mass culture; and the observations of cultural critics such as Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer on the world taking shape before their eyes. We will also read works set in Berlin but written by outsiders (Isherwood and Porter).

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-GRST**

Identical With: **GRST275, COL276**

Prereq: **None**

GELT279F Good, Evil, Human: German Fairy Tales and Their Cultural Impact (FYS)

The collected folk tales of Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm have had a substantial impact on the cultural history of Germany and beyond. Despite our sense that we already know these texts, it is worth taking a closer look at their messages. Deceptively simple, these little tales communicate and negotiate extraordinarily important and complicated messages about what it means to be human, to behave in acceptable ways, to have and control unwelcome desires, and to (be able to) imagine a better world. We will read selected fairy tales from the Grimm collection and other texts, investigate the historical context in which the Grimms undertook their ambitious project, learn about ways in which scholarship has framed fairy tales, and discuss adaptations of the fairy-tale tradition in films and texts of the 20th century.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-GRST**

Identical With: **GRST279F, COL279F**

Prereq: **None**

GELT302 Forward, Without Forgetting: The GDR in Literature and Film

In 1949, postwar Germany officially split into two separate countries with the formation of the German Democratic Republic. Also known as East Germany, the GDR was isolated from the Western world for four decades, and it developed its own, equally rich, literary and cinematic cultures. By looking at a range of textual and visual sources, students will engage critically with ways of understanding this "other" Germany and its distinctive cultural expressions, ideology, and history, including the role of the government and the Stasi. The course also explores phenomena like the "Ostalgie" and retro-chic that manifested themselves after the Fall of the Wall in 1989. The readings include works by Günther de Bruyn, Christa Wolf, Brigitte Reimann, and Stefan Heym, among others. Participants will view and discuss films and TV series produced before and after unification.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-GRST**

Identical With: **GRST302, COL291**

Prereq: **GRST213**

GELT401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

GELT402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **A-F**

GELT411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

GELT412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**