

German Studies

“German Studies at Cornell is more than a language program. It is at once a venue to explore German history and culture in both German- and English-language courses, a laboratory for innovative projects in German at the advanced level, and a linguistic and cultural passport to German-speaking Europe.”

Tyler Carrington, Assistant Professor of German Studies

Students can major or minor in German studies at Cornell, and the program also supports a teaching major in German-language instruction.

German studies course offerings include a full range of language courses, as well as two to three English-language seminars per year on German topics. Upper-level courses focus on a specific period in German cultural history or a specific aspect of literature, such as recent courses about the fall of the Berlin Wall, sexology in Berlin and Vienna, and masculinity in the 1920s.

At all levels students typically complete a variety of creative projects, such as designing a digital mapping exhibit about refugees using ArcGIS and Neatline, creating a lifelike reenactment of life in East Germany, or adapting the Grimms' Fairy Tales in a variety of media. Whether students enter college with substantial previous study in German or none at all, there are a host of courses, clubs, and events to push boundaries and develop language skills and cultural competencies.

Students may wish to pursue German studies as their primary field of study or as a complement to other majors, because Germany is firmly planted at the center of European and world affairs. It has the largest economy in Europe, is the global leader in green technology and innovative environmental policy,

and is the home of multiple high-tech industries, from solar panel production to high-end electronics and automobile design. Germany is also widely seen as the political center of Europe and a critical player in international politics and diplomacy.

German is the business language of Europe. BASF, Siemens, and BMW all have U.S. offices, and dozens of American corporations like John Deere and Rockwell Collins have operations in Germany. The U.S. State Department is also keenly interested in Germany. With a background in German, students have access not only to economic and political opportunities in a global world, but also to thinkers like Kant, Freud, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Kafka, Rilke, and Thomas Mann, who will shape their lives and worldviews no matter what their field of study.

Germany's culture is vibrant, multicultural, and diverse, as demonstrated by the award-winning films of Fatih Akın, the fiction of Anna Seghers, Christa Wolf, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, the poetry of Zehra Çırak, the political satire of Noah Sow, the theoretical writings of Kien Nghi Ha, or the theatrical productions of the Ballhaus Naunynstraße. The ongoing social, cultural, and economic integration of over a million refugees from the Middle East will also shape German life moving forward.

BENEFITS OF ONE COURSE AT A TIME

Cornell's One Course At A Time curriculum makes it easy for students to arrange educational opportunities abroad. For example, it's possible to take two blocks and intern with the German parliament on a DAAD-Bundestag

Faculty Bios & Courses

TYLER CARRINGTON
*Assistant Professor of
German Studies and History*

Teaches a wide range of German language, European history, and gender studies courses. These courses range from German 101 to senior seminars, including Berlin: The Birth of a World City; The Fall of the Berlin Wall; Sports and Athletic Culture in Germany; Reimagining Masculinity in the 1920s; The Holocaust; and German-Americans in Iowa. He is a cultural historian of modern Germany, and his first book, "Love at Last Sight: Dating, Intimacy, and Risk in turn-of-the-century Berlin" (forthcoming from Oxford University Press in early 2019) examines the risks and rewards of modern dating in the modern metropolis. Ph.D., history, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

scholarship. Students can also apply for any number of internships in the natural and applied sciences at German laboratories and businesses.

Studying abroad is also easily arranged. The department now offers a block abroad in Vienna, Munich, and Berlin every other year, which can serve either as a wonderful introduction to German studies or an epic conclusion (or both). Students can also choose from a list of about 30 approved study abroad programs. With the flexibility provided by the block plan, students can study abroad for a month or two, or they can pursue a more traditional semester or year long program. Most students go abroad during their junior year, and after they have completed a 300-level German course, but academic and professional experiences abroad are beneficial and life-changing at any stage in a student's Cornell career.

Those looking for intense language learning in Germany can look to the Goethe Institut, which supports German training centers throughout Germany and around the world and provides an especially excellent match for the block plan because courses are offered for one month (about the length of one block at Cornell), two months, or longer. The semester-long Vienna Program sponsored by Central College is another popular option. Tuition at German universities is free, even for non-Germans, making these programs very affordable.

Summer language learning camps such as those at Middlebury College (Vermont), Concordia College (Minnesota), Portland State University (Oregon), and the University of New Mexico, where students take pledges to speak only German the entire summer, are also very effective ways of jumpstarting a German studies major or minor at Cornell.

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

German studies majors complete their degrees with capstone projects designed to develop strong mastery of German linguistic, cultural, and historical knowledge. Students design their own interdisciplinary research projects that culminate in a final paper or series of papers. Past capstones include historiographical studies, education portfolios, websites and informative videos, and digital mapping exhibits, among others.

The German program hosts a weekly "Stammtisch" dinner conversation table in the Hilltop Cafe, where Cornell students of all German abilities come together for casual German conversation, as well as the German Club, a student organization focused on cultural activities for all Cornell students, German speaking or not. Recent German Club events include a trip to Oktoberfest in the Amana Colonies, participation in the annual Languages Program Bake-Off on campus, attending the opera "Parzifal" by

Richard Wagner at the Lyric Opera in Chicago, a German holiday cookie bake, and a German karaoke and open-mic night.

Accomplished students may be invited to join Delta Phi Alpha, the national German honor society. The Cornell chapter, Zeta Tau, was founded in 1968, and its membership comprises majors and nonmajors who have demonstrated superior ability in 300-level German courses and who meet the national requirements.

INTERNSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

One Cornell student recently participated in a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in Germany, and another received a DAAD Fellowship through the German Academic Exchange Service, a publicly funded independent organization of higher education institutions in Germany. A senior physics major recently spent a month at the Albert Einstein Institute in Hannover working on fiber optics, and a German and art history student recently interned with the Amana Heritage Museum in Eastern Iowa's famous Amana Colonies.

AFTER CORNELL

Germany is a world leader in green energy and technology, luxury automobiles, engineering, and finance, and there are many opportunities open to professionals with experience in German language, culture, and history. In addition, German was long the lingua franca in fields like chemistry, physics, engineering, philosophy, history, art history, music, and religious studies. Graduate school programs in these fields often require previous German study or look highly upon it as proof of rigorous undergraduate preparation for advanced study.

ALUMNI CAREERS

Global law and international citizenship master's in jurisprudence program, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa (Class of 2016)

Field organizer at Colorado Democratic Party, Grand Junction, Colorado (Class of 2016)

Master's of teaching program, St. Martin's University, Lacey, Washington (Class of 2016)

Advanced naturalist intern, Audubon Center of the North Woods, Sandstone, Minnesota (Class of 2014)

Dance instructor, Portland, Oregon (Class of 2012)

Program coordinator, Welthungerhilfe, Turkey (Class of 2012)

Assistant manager, Goodwill Industries, Lees Summit, Missouri (Class of 2011)

German teacher, Dassel-Cokato High School, Cokato, Minnesota (Class of 2008)