

GERMAN STUDIES

ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION



"The German Studies program challenges students to improve their writing, reading comprehension, and conversational skills. Students have opportunities to study German film, philosophy, and many other topics. And with the five-month immersive study abroad opportunity in Regensburg, Germany, students can increase their fluency in a passionate and exciting learning environment."

ALEXANDRA CODY

Centre Class of 2018

Double Major: German Studies and Computer Science

ARENDT, BENJAMIN, DÜRER, EINSTEIN, FREUD, GOETHE, KAFKA, LEIBNIZ, LUTHER, MARX, MERKEL, MOZART . . . THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE GERMAN SPEAKERS WHO HAVE CHANGED OUR WORLD. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE EINSTEIN TO LEARN GERMAN! (THE WORD "ENGLISH" COMES FROM AN OLD GERMANIC TRIBE CALLED THE ANGLES!) EVEN A BEGINNING GERMAN STUDENT WILL ALREADY UNDERSTAND HUNDREDS OF WORDS THAT ARE SIMILAR IN ENGLISH AND GERMAN, LIKE *DAS BUCH*, *DIE MUTTER*, *DER APFEL*, AND MANY MORE!

LEARNING GERMAN AT CENTRE

Learning German at Centre is an exciting adventure in a culture that has helped shape our modern world. When the great German-speaking poet Rainer Maria Rilke said "*Du mußt dein Leben ändern!*" (You must change your life!), he was referring to the profound effect that a work of art had elicited in him. Art and literature have transformative powers. Nothing transforms you as much as immersing yourself in another culture. Learning German opens up a whole new perspective: you will be able to visit, enjoy, study, and live in Germany, Austria, or Switzerland, and you will be able to appreciate masterpieces of German literature and works of great philosophers, theologians, and other thinkers in the original language.

Some of the world's greatest artists and as well as scholars in almost every discipline in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences have come from a strong German tradition. Through 2016, scientists from the three major German-speaking countries won 36 Nobel Prizes in physics, 40 in chemistry, and

33 in medicine, while many laureates from other countries received their training at German universities. 12 German-speaking writers have been awarded the Nobel Prize for literature (including 2009 winner Herta Müller, 2004 winner Elfriede Jelinek, and 1999 winner Gunter Grass), and seven Germans or Austrians have received the Nobel Peace Prize.

Your professors in the German program at Centre College believe in helping you to reach both language and cultural fluency through a variety of experiences that integrate German, Austrian, and Swiss culture into the classroom. Indeed, our classrooms reach beyond the walls of Centre in Danville to embrace all of these countries.

DEUTSCHKLUB, THEATER, KAFFEEKLATSCH, BRATWURST

Goethe said: "*Es ist nicht genug zu wissen, man muß auch anwenden. Es ist nicht genug zu wollen, man muß auch tun.*" (It is not enough to know, we must also put into practice. It is not enough to want to, we must also do.) In the spirit of Goethe's dictum, we enhance our classes with special activities:

• DEUTSCHKLUB

The German club on campus, the Deutschklub, sponsors an informal weekly Stammtisch (conversation table), organizes trips to cultural events and German restaurants, and helps bring German-language cinema to Centre's campus.

• THEATER

As part of a course emphasizing pronunciation and oral expression, students spend a term improvising scenes from great works of German-language drama. The course requires no skill in play-acting, just interest in the interplay of language and action.

• KAFFEEKLATSCH

All departmental business is conducted in German and faculty enjoy meeting students for coffee to chat informally in German about their *Weltanschauung* and the current *Zeitgeist*.

• BRATWURST

At least twice a year, the culinary-minded Germanophiles get together to cook a German meal. Some years it is just sausage and sauerkraut, but in other years the spreads have been more elaborate. It is fun to lift a glass to the lands that gave the world hamburgers, frankfurters, strudel, spätzle, Wiener schnitzel, *Kaffeeuchen*, and Red Bull.

GERMAN COURSES

Our German curriculum seeks to integrate the most fascinating aspects of German-speaking culture with the acquisition of language skills. Each course in the German major focuses on a central question. In **Vaterland und Muttersprache** we look deeply into historical and contemporary definitions of “Germany” and “German” to understand how complex these notions can be. Other courses investigate **German Cultural Geography**, deep levels of **Advanced German Grammar**, and the theme of love in German literature and culture. **German Film** seeks to better understand the culture, history, politics, social structures, and language of Central Europe through arguably the most important art form of the 20th-century.

STUDY ABROAD

We maintain vital contacts with institutions throughout Germany and Austria and will find the right study-abroad experience for you, be that in a home-stay in German-speaking Kehl (right across the river from Centre’s own Strasbourg program), a new cooperative program at the Universität Regensburg, or a program sponsored by another institution. Recently students have chosen to further their German fluency in cities such as Berlin, Freiburg, Munich, Regensburg, and Trier, among others. “*Wanderlust*” is a wonderful German word that expresses the joys that come from setting out from home and discovering a whole new world. Many German students continue their study of German after they graduate, whether on Fulbrights or as teachers of English.

FULBRIGHTS AND DAAD AWARDS

All faculty members who teach German are Fulbright recipients, and the German Studies program has had outstanding success in recent years assisting students in receiving Fulbright grants to study and teach in Germany and Austria — five German majors from the classes of 2008-2013 received Fulbrights. Other students have received grants from the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst or DAAD) to expand their knowledge of German in Germany.

WHO TEACHES GERMAN STUDIES AT CENTRE?

CHRISTINA SVENDSEN (Ph.D., Harvard University). Dr. Svendsen joined the Centre College faculty in 2016 as visiting assistant professor of French and German. Her research and teaching interests include comparative modernisms, the writings of Walter Benjamin, and the intersection of literary, architectural, and critical theory. Svendsen earned an A.B. in literature, and an A.M. and Ph.D. in comparative literature from Harvard University; and an M.F.A. in fiction from the University of Virginia.

IAN WILSON (Ph.D., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill). Dr. Wilson arrived at Centre in 2003 after completing a Fulbright year in Vienna as part of his graduate training. He has received two teaching awards while at Centre. He guided students to Central Europe during the 2008, 2012, and 2015 CentreTerms, and led the Centre-in-Strasbourg program in 2008-09 and 2015-16. He also took a small group of students to Germany in the summer of 2013 for a German-immersion course.

VISIT CENTRE

The best way to judge Centre is to tour the campus, talk with the professors and students, attend a class, and spend the night in a residence hall. We invite you to visit and encourage you to contact the Admission Office if you have any questions.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE GERMAN STUDIES PROGRAM AT CENTRE, CONTACT:

Ian Wilson, Program Chair
600 West Walnut Street
Danville, Kentucky 40422
859.238.5241
ian.wilson@centre.edu

GERMAN STUDIES WEB PAGE

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