DOREEN DENSKY

Introduction to German Literature

This course has two major goals. First, it introduces students to a selection of representative authors and exemplary texts of German-language literature from the 18th to the 21st century. Second, it helps students develop close and critical reading skills while they learn to express their analysis of literary texts in German, both in speaking and in writing. Covering the three major literary genres—poetry, prose, drama—some of the following issues will be discussed: the representation of time and history; the uncanny; the relationship between form and content; the depiction of otherness; and the economy of human relationships on the basis of hierarchy, love, and authority. (The course is required for the German major.) Taught in German.

TR 2:00–3:15PM
GERM-UA152 | SPRING 2022
GERM-UA200 | HBRJD-UA200

History of the Jews in 20th Century Europe: Comparative Perspectives - Italy, Germany, & France

SPRING 2022 | M 9:30-12:00pm | Marion Kaplan

This course explores the interactions of Jews and other Western Europeans after World War II, noting their interlocking histories and memories even after the Holocaust. Students will learn about Western European Jewish life from Emancipation through the early 20th century, the Holocaust and the immediate postwar turmoil especially in Germany, Italy and France.
GERM-UA240 / COLIT-UA240.002

Marx, Nietzsche, & Freud
Spring 2022 / MW 4:55 – 6:10 pm

AVITAL RONELL

This course aims to engage curious minds in new and lasting ways that help one analyze history, literature, science, law, social collapse, ghostly returns and intersubjective relationships. The course takes off from the works of Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud. These works have defined our world in crucial ways. Their abiding influence on our every move, though often stealth, will become clear during the course of our readings. It is more necessary than ever to encounter these blockbuster texts, intellectually meaningful to this day and still programming our existential perspectives.

The course offers introductory but also wide-ranging and probing materials. We shall analyze outstanding passages by these breakout writers and look at works that have come under their influence, grappling with them in fascinating ways - including the contributions of Jacques "deconstruction" Derrida, Hélène Cixous, Kathy Acker, Marguerite Duras, Franz Kafka, and many other contemporary players.
This course is an introduction to the dialectical tradition, which conceived of thought as dynamic and critical rather than static and representational. The course dwells at equal length on the modern dialectic's origins in the philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel, its elaboration as critical economic thought in the work of Karl Marx, and its use as the basis of a critical theory by Theodor W. Adorno. Other authors to be considered may include but are not limited to György Lukács, Franz Fanon, Mao Zedong, Richard Lewontin, and Sylvia Wynter.
How to be happy, given life’s difficulties? Should happiness even be our goal? The poet Rainer Maria Rilke’s *Letters to a Young Poet* (1907-11; published 1929) call on us “to love the questions” rather than resolve challenges as quickly as they arise. Different from conceptions of happiness that equate it with optimization of personal performance, the great works of literature and philosophy neither gloss over nor accept obstacles but seek another path. In the seminar we read Rilke and several of his global contemporaries, including Oscar Wilde, Franz Kafka, Kate Chopin, W.E.B. DuBois, Edith Wharton, Martin Buber, Sigmund Freud, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Sui Sin Far, Djuna Barnes and others to learn how to stay with life’s unavoidable difficulties so that we may live and love more deeply and authentically.
Topics in German Cinema:
Contemporary German Film

GERM-UA 390  TR 9:30-10:45AM

German cinema is on the map again. The many awards German films have been granted over the last 20 years speak to the renaissance of German Cinema since 2000. Among these movies are Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck’s *The Lives of Others* (Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, 2006), Caroline Link’s *Nowhere in Africa* (Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, 2002), Fatih Akin’s *Head-On* (Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival, 2004; European Film Award 2004), Oliver Hirschbiegel’s *Downfall* (nominated for Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, 2004) or Wolfgang Becker’s *Goodbye, Lenin!* (European Film Award, 2003). Nazi Germany, the Stasi, or the Reunification are prominent topics of this internationally acclaimed Contemporary German Cinema. Parallel to these mainstream productions, an aesthetically far more adventurous cinema has developed known as “Berlin School” or “Nouvelle Vague Allemande.” Directors associated with the Berlin School are Christian Petzold, Angela Schanelec, Christoph Hochhäusler or Valeska Grisebach. Dissecting the everyday reality of post-wall Germany, this ‘counter-cinema’ draws on the New German Cinema of the 1970s (among others) to develop radical notions of realism and challenge narrative conventions. This course will give a survey on German Film since 2000 – discussing the historical and cultural context of selected movies as well as analyzing aesthetic strategies and concepts of realism in Contemporary German Cinema.

Elisabeth Strowick
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Taught in German
Spring 2022
RETHINKING POLITICS: HANNAH ARENDT

ANDREA KRAUSS

GERM-UA 488 // MW 9:30-10:45AM // SPRING 2022

Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) was one of the most original political theorists of the twentieth century. She described her work as “thinking without banisters,” envisioning an analytical practice that engages with the ideas and events of her time without relying on established conceptualizations of human existence.

The course will introduce students to key topics of Arendt’s work, among them her thoughts about totalitarianism, propaganda and revolution, the nature of freedom, moral responsibility under dictatorship and the faculties of love and judgment. We will closely analyze (excerpts of) Arendt’s writings and evaluate her contribution to the discussion of ethics, politics, and the possibility of a humane and democratic public life. We will also watch interviews and the feature film by director Margarethe von Trotta, Hannah Arendt (2012).

Readings and discussions in German.