

## GER 375: Major Colloquy

2 credits



Stadtbibliothek in Stuttgart



Medea-Wien, *Burgtheater*

Instructor: Peter Höyng, PhD, Professor of German Studies  
Class meetings: T, Th 4:00-4:50 p.m.  
Class Space: New Psychology Bldg. 250  
Office Hours: By appointment: <https://calendly.com/phoeyng/office-hour>  
E-mail: [phoeyng@emory.edu](mailto:phoeyng@emory.edu)  
I usually respond to emails within 12-24 hours, except on weekends (Friday afternoon through Monday morning).  
Phone: (404) 712-4614  
Language of Instruction: English and German

## Course Description

In this two-hour capstone colloquy, you will encounter an in-depth reflection on what it means to pursue German studies, i.e., the studying of German as a foreign language, its literature, films, music, and other artistic or cultural productions from German-speaking cultures. The course is designed for those of you who major or minor in German studies, and have junior standing.

Those of you who are juniors will learn more about how to pursue research in German studies and/or an honors thesis during your last year at Emory College of Arts & Sciences. Those of you who are seniors will learn how to frame your German studies as an asset towards a successful career after graduation, whether you continue as a graduate student, or pursue other professional endeavors. Beyond these professional benefits, you will also learn to better explain how the study of German language and artistic productions from the German-speaking cultures are an enrichment for who you are and will become as a citizen of the world.

## Course Objectives

Through a variety of readings, discussions, media, writing assignments, you will explore a range of topics pertaining to your past and future experiences of exploring German studies as a major or minor. Doing so, this course pursues **six major objectives**:

- First, throughout the semester it invites you in English and German to reflect intentionally and communicate effectively what it means to you to pursue German studies at Emory.
- Second, it exposes you to specifics of German intellectual history that helps to explain how the concept of *Bildung* came into being.
- Third, it provides a brief history and framework for German studies, first in Germany as *Germanistik*, and then as a discipline of its own in the US.
- Fourth, you will realize how German studies connects to and draws on other disciplines within the humanities and social sciences such as philosophy, history, music, film studies, political sciences, women's studies, or the liberal arts in general.
- Fifth, by doing so, you will become aware that cultural phenomena from the German-speaking world are approached from different methodologies such as feminism, or the critique of the Frankfurt School, or environmental studies, or minorities and transnational literature, or gender studies, or new approaches to thinking about and teaching German as a foreign language.
- Sixth, based on these historical and methodological contexts, you learn a step-by-step approach of how to do research on a variety of topics.

## Five Units

- Historical contexts: the concepts of Germaness, *Bildung*, and origins of modern scholarship (September)
- The beginnings of *Germanistik* and an introduction and overview of German studies in the US (September)
- German studies as an interdisciplinary discipline with a plurality of methods (October)
- Developing ideas for further research projects: reflections on and tools for a research project and/or honors thesis (November)
- Various presentations of your semester work

## Specific Goals

By the end of this semester, you should be able to

- reflect on German studies' place in the academy
- explain key aspects of the discipline's development from *Germanistik* to German studies in the US
- critically reflect on one or two predominant methodologies in German studies
- develop as a team a research topic based on bibliographical work
- self-assess in English and German your own development as a student of German studies minor/major by creating a portfolio, and by giving a final presentation

## General Goals

I want you to understand that all of the above six major objectives goals and five specific goals actually prepare you for various future professional pathways. In fact, they correspond to a number of professional organizations to skills and competencies employers seek in college graduates, among them are:

- Analyzing complex topics
- Critical thinking
- Communication
- Professionalism
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Teamwork
- Technology

## Course Material

All material needed for the class will be provided either as hard copies and/or as pdf-documents on Canvas. We will mainly read excerpts to the extent legally possible.

## Expectations of your Work and Engagement

I expect that you need about an hour-and-half to two hours preparation-time per class session, i.e., about three to four hours outside of our class discussions. Expect in September and October that the bulk of the preparation will be reading assignments, and short writing assignments that guide each of your readings. In November, you will develop in a team step-by-step a research project based on short literary texts, and an initial bibliographical work. All writing assignments will be kept short. At the end of the course, you should be able to give an oral presentation in German on your past and future German studies.

## Grading Scale

Homework assignments	25%
Active Class participation	25%
Research project	20%
Portfolio: reflecting on your semester work as a German studies major/minor	20%
Final: An oral presentation in German reflecting on your German studies	10%

## Homework Assignments and Active Class Participation

Attendance *and* active participation are essential to your progress. In order to fully participate, come prepared to each class session by having read the assigned text and written the specific

homework in regard to the assigned readings, e.g., *Arbeitsblätter*. Once you have done your homework, you should feel comfortable to actively engage with your classmates and myself. You will be trained throughout the semester to answer questions in complete sentences, and by providing evidence for claims you will make about a text or point you wish to make.

### Research topic

In late October, you will begin with two other classmates to develop a research topic that includes bibliographical research. The three of you will be asked to prepare in English at a minimum a three-page outline of the potential research project, accompanied by an annotated bibliography.

### Portfolio

Throughout the semester you will be invited to reflect in German and English on your ongoing work as a German studies minor/major. At the end of the semester, your portfolio should include as a minimum the following six components or entries:

- An initial statement of who you are, and what German studies means to you
- Three homework assignments of your choice on which you comment briefly why each one of them are of particular meaning to you
- Your research outline, plus a bibliography
- A final statement of who you are, and what German studies means to you at the end of this course.

All six contributions should show a high degree of professionalism and may include visual and audio media. Please use Microsoft Word's *Sway* which you can find on Emory's licensed "Office 365."

### Final

As a team of three you will be asked to self-reflect, explain in German what German studies means to you, your past and present experiences with it, and which research project could be of possible interest to you, and on which methodology you would want to rely.

### **Attendance Policy**

You will be allowed a maximum of 2 absences during the semester without penalty. Beginning with the 3<sup>rd</sup> absence, a penalty of -1% will be levied on the earned final grade for each class missed. Note that you can make up for one absence by participating in an extra-curricular activity.

This semester due to the pandemic, some students might be sick or will need to go into isolation or quarantine. If you are sick, understand that I will be flexible about attendance. Please make sure to e-mail me so that we can discuss your individual circumstances. For students in quarantine who are well, I will provide ways that you can keep up with your schoolwork. Please also contact me via e-mail if you are in quarantine.

### **Honor Policy**

The Honor Code of Emory College is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on quizzes and exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the instructor's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of

academic misconduct. You agree that the instructor is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council. **The central issue is that any work submitted to an instructor for evaluation should be one's own.**

The development and improvement of online translation resources in recent years poses challenges for maintaining the academic integrity of language learning. The German Studies Department's policy regarding the use of these resources is motivated by the distinction between those resources that require active attention to the language and thus enhance learning and those that are automated and minimize or eliminate reflection about the language. As a result, assistance on graded work is possible under the following specific circumstances:

- For grammar: You may consult print or online resources for grammar explanations (e.g., verb conjugations), but the use of automated grammar correction software is not permitted;
- For vocabulary: You may consult print or online resources for the translation of individual words. Currently, the department approves the following online dictionaries: [LEO](#), [Linguee](#), and [dict.cc](#). Using online resources to translate phrases, entire sentences, or paragraphs is not permitted. As a result, the use of online translators, such as Google Translate and DeepL, is not permitted;
- For spelling: The use of built-in spell checkers is not permitted, unless specified by your instructor;
- In-person: Seeking assistance in person is encouraged, particularly with a German Studies or EPASS tutor, but it should be limited to reviewing certain topics or revising and improving completed work. The ultimate production of the work to be turned in will rest with you.

Even when there seems to be a need to use the limited outside resources permitted, the German Studies Department encourages you to use vocabulary and structures already known. The department has worked diligently to structure its assignments such that they can be completed almost exclusively without any outside assistance. If you feel that you are unable to complete an assignment with your existing language abilities and have a strong need to use outside resources, please speak with your instructor for ways to address these concerns.

The Honor Code, a list of offenses and the Honor Council process may be found; [http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor\\_code.html](http://college.emory.edu/home/academic/policy/honor_code.html)

### **Teaching and learning during the pandemic**

Some of you may need to be off campus for some portion of the semester. I want our classroom community to thrive no matter the classroom delivery method or your individual methods of participating in class. I cannot guarantee an identical experience for students who cannot be physically in the classroom or an experience that is identical to pre-pandemic semesters, but my goal is to treat all students equitably and to ensure grading is clear, consistent, and fair for all of you.

As always, communication is important. I commit to responding to emails within 24 hours of receipt, and my intention to respond faster than that most of the time. Except for emergencies, I will not use my professional e-mail over weekends (Friday afternoons through Monday mornings). If your situation changes regarding health, housing, or in any other regard

with respect to your ability to participate in the class, please contact the appropriate Emory student support organization first and then me as soon as feasible. It is easier for me to address your needs if I know about them as soon as they arise. This does not mean I can successfully respond to every request for consideration, but I emphasize that my goal is to treat you all equitably and do what I can to help you succeed in this course.

### **Classroom safety**

Everybody must keep their face mask on at all times when they are indoors on campus, and this includes in our classroom. Your face mask must cover your nose, mouth, and chin, and should fit snugly. Due to the necessity of keeping your PPE on, eating and drinking is forbidden in the classroom. Please read this [Emory advice about quality and fit of mask](#). If you are not complying with the masking requirement, I will have to ask you to leave the classroom to ensure my safety and the safety of your classmates. Keep in mind that some of your classmates may not be able to be vaccinated and/or are immunocompromised, so Emory's campus masking policy ensures everyone's safety without requiring anybody to disclose their personal situation.

### **Health considerations**

At the very first sign of not feeling well, *stay at home* and reach out for a health consultation. Please consult the [campus FAQ](#) for how to get the health consultation. Recognize that Emory is using several layers of safety: the vaccine mandate, the indoor face mask requirement, and contact tracing.

### **Accessibility and accommodations**

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. I want every student to succeed. The Department of Accessibility Services (DAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. It is your responsibility to request accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must [register with the DAS](#). Accommodations cannot be retroactively applied so you need to contact DAS as early as possible and contact me as early as possible in the semester to discuss the plan for implementation of your accommodations.

For additional information about accessibility and accommodations, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at (404) 727-9877 or [accessibility@emory.edu](mailto:accessibility@emory.edu).

### **Stress management and mental health**

As a student, you may find that personal and academic stressors in your life, including those related to remote study, COVID-19, economic instability, and/or racial injustice, are creating barriers to learning this semester. Many students face personal and environmental challenges that can interfere with their academic success and overall wellbeing. If you are struggling with this class, please visit me during office hours or contact me via email at [phoeyng@emory.edu](mailto:phoeyng@emory.edu). If you are feeling overwhelmed and think you might benefit from additional support, please know that there are people who care and offices to support you at Emory. These services – including confidential resources – are provided by staff who are respectful of students' diverse backgrounds. For an extensive list of well-being resources on campus, please go to: <http://campuslife.emory.edu/support/index.html>. And keep in mind that Emory offers free, 24/7 emotional, mental health, and medical support resources via TimelyCare: <https://timelycare.com/emory>.

Other Emory resources include:

- [Counseling & Psychological Services](#)
- [Office of Spiritual & Religious Life](#)
- [Student Case Management and Interventions Services](#)
- [Student Health Services Psychiatry](#)
- [Support During A Crisis: A Guide for Faculty & Staff](#)
- [Emory Anytime Student Health Services](#)

### **Diversity & Inclusion**

At its core, this course embraces a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. We respect people from all backgrounds and recognize the differences among ourselves, including racial and ethnic identities, religious practices, and gender expressions. Please let me know what name you like to be called and your gender pronouns.

### **Guidelines for engagement**

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Respect one another's views, even when you disagree with them.
- Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating.
- Avoid blame and speculation. Support your argument with evidence.
- What is said in class stays in class. Hard conversations and statements should remain between members of the class creating a brave and safe space.
- Speak from the "I" perspective: don't assume that you can speak for members of a group that you are not a part of.

Last revised  
May 9, 2022