The Department of German Studies at Brown offers a Ph.D. program which both provides a coherent perspective on major developments in German literature, culture, and critical thought in the modern period (1517 to the present) and provides students with the opportunity to develop their own specialized interests in German Studies. The program requires a secondary field of study consisting of a coherent sequence of four courses outside the Department. With guidance from the Director of Graduate Studies, each student plans this sequence in a specialized area of interest. Some examples of possible specialized programs of study are Media Studies, History, Jewish Studies, Visual Arts, Philosophy, Music, or Theater. Drawing on the expertise of eminent scholars in these fields, who are teaching at Brown both in and beyond the German Studies Department, the program thus fosters a transdisciplinary approach in the field of German Studies.

The guiding principle of our curriculum is a conscious exploration of those topics and moments in the history of German culture and critical thought which define its uniqueness, exemplify broader issues in the humanities, or have resonated most strongly in other cultures. Fields which unify these goals – aesthetics and critical theory – are among our strengths.

The program is designed to prepare students for a diverse and ever-changing workplace, within academia and outside. To become first-rate scholars and researchers, students are trained to develop their writing skills and to deliver publishable work in their graduate career. To turn into mature and innovative teachers, they are exposed to a rigorous program of theoretical and practical approaches to teaching. To enable them to become esteemed professionals, students will learn to perform research and to process information effectively and efficiently and to communicate highly complex subjects to a variety of audiences.
ADMISSION

Applicants should submit a writing sample (in German or English) of approximately 20 pages. The GRE is required. Foreign students also will need to take the TOEFL exam. The letter of application should suggest research interests as well as possible fields of secondary study. Applicants should present evidence of advanced proficiency in German and a solid background in German literature, culture, and critical thought.

For admission forms, please visit the Graduate School’s website.

Students whose primary department for graduate work at Brown is not German Studies may earn an M.A. in German Studies by completing 8 courses in the area of German Studies. These shall include at least 6 courses within the Department of German Studies and a maximum of 2 approved courses in a closely related field. None of these may overlap with coursework completed for the student’s home department.

Students who obtain a B.A. in German Studies from Brown may integrate their undergraduate studies with work towards an M.A. as part of the 5th-year Masters program. Six additional courses beyond the B.A. are required. Please see the Dean of College’s website for more information.

The Department does not accept outside applications for a terminal M.A. degree.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D.

COURSEWORK

A total of 13 courses are required. Among these shall be:

LANG 2900 (taught by the Director of the Center for Language Studies) – “The Theory and Practice of Foreign Language Learning and Teaching”

4 courses in a secondary field of study, usually consisting of a sequence of courses in another Ph.D. program at Brown, such as Comparative Literature, History, Music, Theater Arts & Performance Studies, Philosophy, MCM, and History of Art & Architecture.

Graduate Students at the course-taking stage are required to take a minimum of 2 graduate seminars per semester in the Department of German Studies.
Requests for exception to this policy must be approved by both the DGS and the Department Chair.

At the beginning of each academic term, graduate students will meet with the Director of Graduate Studies in order to discuss their progress and to have their proposed coursework for the respective semester approved.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Students may fulfill this requirement in one of two ways:

1) demonstrate reading proficiency in two languages (other than English and German) by taking the reading exams in those departments at Brown; or

2) complete a 1000-level course in one foreign literature department at Brown. This course must be taught in the respective language.

The language requirement must be satisfied before a student presents himself or herself for the qualifying examination.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The qualifying examination consists of two parts: 1) a general examination and 2) a specialized fields examination based on two reading lists prepared by the candidate.

The first part of the examination, the general exam, takes place at the end of the first semester in the student’s third year. It is a 90-minute oral examination based on a standing departmental list of 35 canonical works drawn from the tradition of German literary writing and critical thought. This standing list will be made available to the student by the Director of Graduate Studies upon entry into the program. The departmental faculty as a whole will administer this portion of the examination.

The second part of the examination takes place at the end of the second semester of the student’s third year. It is based on two lists compiled by the candidate in consultation with his or her dissertation advisor and a 3-person examination committee, of which the primary advisor is normally a part. (Students will nominate a primary dissertation advisor by the end of the fourth semester, and choose a 3-person examination committee in consultation with the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.) In this second part of the qualifying examination, one list will be the “Literature List,” the other the “Theory List.” Students are encouraged to choose non-contiguous areas of inquiry for the two lists. Each of these specialized lists will be accompanied by a statement outlining the candidate’s main ideas, questions, and theses in
relation to the chosen scholarly problem, topic, or approach. Final versions of these two statements and lists must be submitted to the members of the examination committee at least 3 weeks before the examination is to be administered.

Based on these lists and statements, the committee will prepare a question in relation to each of the two areas that the lists address. The candidate will receive the question for the first list on a Friday by noon; he or she will then have until 5:00 p.m. the following Monday to prepare and submit his or her written answer, which will normally be between 10 and 15 pages. The following Friday, he or she will receive the question for the second list, again by noon; he or she will then have once again until 5:00 p.m. the following Monday to prepare and submit his or her written answer to the second question, which will normally be between 10 and 15 pages.

By the first Friday after the second part of the written examination, a two-hour oral examination based on the written responses will be held.

Students will be assigned either "Pass with Honors," "Pass," or "Fail" for the qualifying examination.

Upon successful completion of the qualifying examination, graduate students are eligible to be awarded the M.A. in German Studies.

Should a candidate fail to pass the qualifying examination or a portion thereof, he or she will be allowed to take the examination (or the portion that was failed) one more time during the following semester. If a candidate fails a second time, the result is termination.

**DISSEMINATION PROPOSAL**

After successfully completing the qualifying examination, the student shall, in consultation with his or her primary dissertation advisor, nominate two other dissertation readers. By the end of the first week of the fall semester in the fourth year of study, the student shall present a substantive written dissertation proposal.

The exact format of the proposal will be determined by the primary advisor, but it will generally be between 15 and 20 pages in length, and include a tentative chapter outline and preliminary bibliography. The proposal will be examined orally by the three members of the dissertation committee by the end of that semester. The committee will either approve the proposal or recommend revisions. Once the proposal is approved, the student will be advanced to Ph.D. candidacy.
DISSERTATION DEFENSE

After the dissertation has been completed and accepted by all three members of the dissertation committee, a dissertation defense takes place, consisting of a public presentation and discussion of the thesis. The date of the defense is selected in consultation with the dissertation committee. The defense will begin with an oral presentation by the candidate, offering a brief overview of the main theses and structure of the dissertation (usually 15-30 minutes). This presentation will be followed by a 60- to 90-minute discussion in which the candidate responds to questions posed by the committee, and, if present, other faculty. At the end of the defense, members of the committee consult and vote on whether to pass the dissertation. The Graduate School requires that the dissertation be accepted by all three readers before the doctoral degree can be awarded.

TEACHING

Students are required to teach for at least two years, though the norm will be higher.

Graduate student teaching is an important component of our doctoral program. As teaching assistants, graduate students work with the Language Program Director to teach beginning and intermediate German. Graduate students are required to take a seminar on language pedagogy and to participate in annual teaching workshops held in August. As graduate students progress in their program, they will assist faculty in undergraduate courses in the German Studies Department. Advanced students may be offered the opportunity to work with professors to design their own upper-level courses or to teach such a course with a professor. Faculty mentoring of teaching assistants throughout their course of study is an integral part of our program. Students will be prepared to present a comprehensive teaching portfolio when they enter the job market.

In addition to the language-specific training administered by the German Studies Department, all graduate students are encouraged to participate in the seminars and workshops offered by Brown’s Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning. The Center offers a teaching certificate program through which graduate students may be awarded Certificate I, II, and III.

The Goethe Institut Boston also periodically offers pedagogy workshops that graduate students are encouraged to attend.

Advanced students will be offered the opportunity to work with professors to design their own upper-level courses or teach such a course with a professor.
OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to organize and participate in student-run colloquia. Graduate students and faculty from other departments working in the area of German Studies may be invited to participate in these. Students will also have the opportunity to present their own work and invite the occasional Brown or non-Brown speaker.

Unfailing attendance at all academic lectures by guest speakers, symposia, special seminars, conferences, etc. organized by the Department of German Studies is expected of all graduate students, regardless of their stage in the program. This opportunity for scholarly exchange is an integral part of their graduate education and an important element in the Department’s intellectual culture.

RESOURCES

We expect our graduate students to participate in the Cogut Humanities Center at Brown University. The Center organizes events such as lecture series, symposia and conferences and also provides a number of fellowship opportunities to faculty and graduate students.

Students are also encouraged to become engaged in the activities of the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning and to build strong teaching portfolios with the help of the Center and by availing themselves of departmental resources such as supervised teaching.

The department has a co-tutelle agreement with the University of Tübingen that allows students to pursue a combined Dr. phil. / Ph.D. degree. Students interested in this option should contact the Director of Graduate Studies upon entering the program.

Graduate students in their third or fourth years have the option to apply for a one-semester stay at the Humboldt University in Berlin. In their application, they must state clearly why their research would benefit from spending a semester in Berlin and whom they have chosen as their mentor while at the Humboldt University. A letter in support of the project from the mentor should accompany the application.

The John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library is the primary teaching and research library for the humanities at Brown. It has an excellent collection in German Studies and related fields of interest. Various other specialized collections are located in the John Hay Library, the Orwig Music Library, and the Art Slide Library. Brown University participates in a collaboration with other research
libraries in the New England area so that faculty and students have access to any material they might need.

The Department regularly welcomes a Max Kade Distinguished Visiting Professor of German Studies who teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in the program. Recent visiting faculty include: Sven Kramer (2011, Lüneburg), Dieter Thomä (2012, St. Gallen), Dirk Oschmann (2013, Leipzig), and Alexander García Düttmann (2015, Berlin). In addition, in recent years the philosopher and critic David Farrell Krell has served as the Department’s Brauer Distinguished Visiting Professor.

RECENTLY OFFERED GRADUATE COURSES IN GERMAN STUDIES

GRMN2340B Poetik der AutorInnen (T. Kniesche)
This course will examine postwar literary aesthetics as put forth in the so-called "Poetikvorlesungen" which several universities in German-speaking countries have instituted since 1959. These lectures have featured important contemporary authors thinking about their work - from poetic practices and aesthetic theories to biographic considerations and the technicalities of writing literature in today's world.

GRMN2460B German Literature 1968–1989 (T. Kniesche)
Discussion of major trends in literature written in German: New Subjectivity, postmodernism, feminist literature, the role of mythology, post-histoire. Authors include Botho Strauss, Elfriede Jelinek, Thomas Bernhard, W.G. Sebald, among others.

GRMN2660J Late Heidegger: Art, Poetry, Technology (G. Richter)
This seminar will focus on key statements in some of the late Heidegger's most influential essays and lectures, with a focus on the nexus of art, poetry, and technology as it inflects language, dwelling, and Being. While in his thinking of art and poetry his emphasis is on the work of Hölderlin, in his thinking of technology he regards the enframing of technics as both completing and undoing Western metaphysics. For Heidegger, the essence of technology is not technological at all but instead requires a wholly different kind of questioning.

GRMN2660K Ontology of Life: Reading Heidegger's Being and Time with Derrida (G. Richter and D. Krell)
Martin Heidegger's Being and Time (1927) develops a "fundamental ontology" of Dasein, or human existence. Dasein, which in each case dies, is for the time being alive. How does mortal human being relate to other life forms? We will read Heidegger's masterpiece in its entirety with this question in mind, a question sharply honed by Jacques Derrida in his Of Spirit,
Aporias, and The Beast and the Sovereign, that is, from the 1980s until his death in 2004.

**GRMN2660A On the Sublime (Z. Sng)**
Survey of major theories of the sublime from antiquity to modern times, with emphasis on German, British, and French texts from the 18th to 20th centuries. Authors include Longinus, Immanuel Kant, Edmund Burke, Jean-Francois Lyotard, and Neil Hertz.

**GRMN 2660L - Hölderlin, in Theory (Z. Sng)**
We will spend the semester reading the enigmatic writings of Friedrich Hoelderlin, with particular focus on the pivotal role that he has come to play in major philological and philosophical projects of our time. Critical readings include texts by Heidegger, Adorno, Benjamin, de Man, and Lacoue-Labarthe.

**IN RELATED DEPARTMENTS**

**HIST 2980W - First Person History in Times of Crisis: Witnessing, Memory, Fiction (O. Bartov)**
This seminar examines the relationship between History as a narrative of events and history as individual experience. Postulating that historical events as related by historians were experienced in numerous different ways by their protagonists, the seminar focuses on the complementary and contradictory aspects of this often fraught relationship at times of crisis, especially in war and genocide. While much time will be spent on World War II and the Holocaust, the seminar will engage with other modern wars and genocides across the world. Materials will include eyewitness reports, postwar testimonies and trial records, memoirs and relevant works of fiction.

**COLT 2821B - Memory/Commemoration/Testimony (S. Bernstein)**
An investigation of the mnemonic functions of poetry from the elegy to historical witnessing in the Romantic and post-romantic period. We will study the creative and performative function of memory as well as processes of repetition, recollection, trauma and canon-formation. Theoretical and poetic texts will be studied together. Authors will include: Rousseau, Wordsworth, Hölderlin, Lamartine, Baudelaire, Dickinson, H.D., Rilke, Celan, Reznikoff; Heidegger, Freud, Arendt, Adorno, Derrida, de Man, Ronell.

**HMAN 2970H - Realism, Idealism, and Modernity I: From Early Modernity through German Idealism (P. Guyer)**
Debates between realism and idealism are central to modernity. The opposition between them might seem straightforward, realism being the philosophy of the scientific worldview, idealism the philosophy of more traditional religion and morality. But sometimes idealism has been the philosophical basis for modern science and moral autonomy, and realism the
basis for more traditional worldviews. The philosophical debate between realism and idealism is thus part of the larger struggle over science, religion, morality and politics in modern culture. This course will begin a two-semester study of this complex dialectic from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.

**COLT2820S - Poetry after Kant (K. McLaughlin)**

Begins with the intensive study of a selection of writings by Kant focused especially on force and conflict in politics and aesthetics. This study, along with relevant readings from more recent work, will provide the basis for an approach to this topic in nineteenth-century poetry. Readings of Kant, Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, and Giorgio Agamben, leading to several "case studies" of 19th-­century poetry, including works by Hölderlin, Baudelaire, and Matthew Arnold.