

Introductory Reading for the German Degree Programme 2024/25

Herzlich Willkommen im Germanistischen Seminar! We are very much looking forward to working with you from September and hope you will find the suggestions below helpful as you prepare for your studies. For clarity and convenience, the list is divided into three sections: A. this covers the units on aspects of German-language culture, history, and linguistics you will take in year 1; B. covers the core language programme you will take in year 1; and C. covers your transition to university. In practice, of course, the study of language and the study of culture and history are closely linked, and we encourage you to embrace all the linguistic benefits of studying German culture through authentic texts, as well as appreciating the cultural content of texts you are studying for language classes. You will also find some general reading, viewing and listening suggestions to keep you immersed in things German over the summer in our separate 'Bridging Materials for German' document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

A. First-year units on German-language culture, history, and linguistics

There are two units on German-language culture, history, and linguistics available in the first-year German programme: 1. German Literature and Film: Genre, Texts and Contexts; and 2. Language and Power: Introductions to German History. Which of these you study depends on your programme, as follows:

- German Single Honours students take both units.
- Post-A-level students on the Three Languages Pathway and students of Law with German choose ONE of the two units.
- All other post A-level Joint Honours students of German will take both units.
- Joint Honours *ab initio* students take Language and Power: Introductions to German History.

NB *Ab initio* students of German on the Three Languages Pathway take only the intensive language programme and do not study any German cultural or history units in Year 1. But you should feel free to dip into the materials listed below so that you are ready to hit the ground running with the cultural, history and linguistics units in Year 2.

All works listed below are available in the University library, but where you need to refer to the same text over a number of weeks, e.g. in the literature unit, we strongly recommend acquiring your own copy of the set text.

1. German Literature and Film: Genre, Texts and Contexts (Teaching Block 1)

The first half of this unit introduces you to the broad sweep of German literary history taught through close reading of poetry. The second half will focus on Christa Wolf's novel *Der geteilte Himmel* (1963) and the 1964 film version of Wolf's novel as a means of providing fresh perspectives on the former GDR.

Essential:

- An anthology of German poetry, compiled by the department and provided on arrival.

- Christa Wolf, *Der geteilte Himmel*, mit einem Kommentar von Sonja Hilzinger (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Basis Bibliothek, 2008), ISBN: 978-3-518-18887-3. We highly recommend that you buy your own copy of this work, in this specific edition, so that you can annotate it. For Single Honours *ab initio* students, we recommend the following translation: Christa Wolf and Luise von Flotow, *They Divided the Sky: A Novel by Christa Wolf*, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2013), ISBN: 978-0776607870.
- A digital version of Konrad Wolf's film (subtitled in English) will be provided.

Recommended:

- Judith Ryan, *The Cambridge Introduction to German Poetry* (Cambridge, 2012) – an invaluable guide to the first half of this unit.
- Nicholas Boyle, *German Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2008) – a stimulating starting-point for this unit and beyond.
- Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of German Literature* (Cambridge, 1997) – a comprehensive reference work that will accompany you throughout your degree and beyond.

Especially if you are new to literary study, you may also enjoy dipping into David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction* (London, 1992), a collection of short, accessible articles on key literary terms, illustrated mainly with excerpts from British and American authors. David Mikics' *Slow Reading in a Hurried Age* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2013) is a passionate and practical guide to savouring literary texts for committed readers and those who feel less confident about literary study alike.

2. Language and Power: Introductions to German History (Teaching Block 2)

This unit offers a wide-ranging introduction to the socio-political and linguistic history of the German-speaking lands and explores the interplay between the development of the modern German nation and the development of its language. We know that you are unlikely to have had any exposure to linguistics before coming to university, and we do not expect you to have any knowledge of this topic before the unit begins. You may, however, find it useful to familiarise yourself with an overview of German history before the start of your course, and you will find some suggested readings below.

Essential:

- Mark Allinson, *Germany and Austria 1814-2000* (London, 2nd edition 2014)*
- Steven Beller, *A Concise History of Austria* (Cambridge, 2007)
- Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany* (Cambridge, 3rd edition 2019)*
- Geraldine Horan, Nils Langer and Sheila Watts (eds), *Landmarks in the History of the German Language* (Bern, 2009)

*We would recommend buying a personal copy of one of these if possible, as a good overview of modern German history will be a useful reference work throughout your course.

Recommended:

- Joseph Salmons, *A History of German. What the past reveals about today's language* (Oxford, 2012)
- Astrid Stedje, *Deutsche Sprache gestern und heute* (Paderborn, 6th edition 2007)

We also recommend Neil MacGregor, *Germany: Memories of a Nation* (London, 2014; paperback edition 2016), which is a thought-provoking read. This is the book to accompany a series of Radio 4 podcasts which you can find at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04dwbwz>.

B. Language Learning

We recommend buying any books below. Feel free to buy second-hand (as long as the answers are not already pencilled in!).

Year 1 Ab initio (German from scratch)

- **Essential** (please ensure you have these books for the first week of teaching, as we will use them in and outside of class)
 - *DaF Kompakt neu: Kursbuch A1-B1 + MP3-CD* (ISBN: 9783126763103)
 - *DaF Kompakt neu: Übungsbuch A1-B1 + MP3-CD* (ISBN: 9783126763110)
- **Recommended** (useful to have a copy for your independent study, in first year and beyond)
 - *Routledge grammars: Essential German Grammar* (ISBN: 9781138785816)
 - *Routledge grammars: Practising German Grammar* (ISBN: 9781138187047)

Year 1 Post A-level

- **Essential** (please ensure you have access to a copy in and outside of class)
 - *Akademie Deutsch B1+: Intensivlehrwerk Band 3* (ISBN: 9783191416508)
Please note, you can also buy this book as an online version, but please ensure you buy the "Hueber Interaktive" - Version (ISBN: 978-3-19-341650-6)
- **Recommended** (useful to have a copy for your independent study, in first year and beyond):
 - *Routledge grammars: Essential German Grammar* (ISBN: 9781138785816)
 - *Routledge grammars: Practising German Grammar* (ISBN: 9781138187047)

C. Making the Transition to University

University study is different from school or non-academic workplaces. In making the journey from being a pupil or professional to being a university student, you may find it helpful to look at some of the following materials on academic and personal development.

Study Skills and Wellbeing

- Stella Cottrell, *The Study Skills Handbook*, 5th edition (Palgrave, 2019) – especially the first couple of chapters
- Joe Moran, *First You Write A Sentence* (Penguin, 2019)
- Bryan Greetham, *How to Write Better Essays* (Macmillan, 2018)
- Dominique Thompson, *Resourcefulness at University* (Trigger, 2019, ISBN 9781789560701)

You can also follow the links to advice on academic reading and writing on the University of Bristol [Study Skills webpages](#).

On Education

You might like to take the opportunity to read about universities as institutions, and about the potential of education to empower individuals and communities:

- David Palfreyman and Paul Temple, *Universities and Colleges: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2017).
- Tom Sperlinger, Josie McLellan and Richard Pettigrew, *Who Are Universities For?* (Bristol University Press, 2018) – a more critical view, by three of our Bristol colleagues.
- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Continuum, 2000; especially chapter 2), and bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress. Education as the Practice of Freedom* (Routledge, 1994), are older, but influential, books on education and empowerment (links [here](#) and [here](#)).

Race, racism, and decolonisation

We would also like to offer you some reading suggestions about race, racism and decolonisation for students of German:

- Online: the Deutsche Welle film [Afro.Deutschland](#) (and its English version, [Afro.Germany](#)), and the [Black Central Europe](#) website.
- History: Olivette Otele, *African Europeans: An Untold History* (Hurst, 2020); Sebastian Conrad, *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte* (Beck, 2016), translated as *German Colonialism: A Short History* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- Principles: those of you with A-Level German might like to read Tupoka Ogette, [Exit Racism](#) (Unrast, 2020), which you can also listen to for free on [Spotify](#).

We are not sending this in the spirit of a 'required reading list', but we hope that along with the other document we are sending you, 'Bridging Materials for German', it helps you to prepare for the start of your university course and to know what books you will need when you start.

Wir freuen uns, Sie im September begrüßen zu dürfen und
wünschen Ihnen eine sonnige und entspannte Ferienzeit bis dahin!

Dr Anna Havinga
Director of Teaching

Ms Mandy Poetzsch
Language Director

Dr Benedict Schofield
Head of Subject