

## **The Barrett Honors College (BHC) and the German Language, Culture & Literature Program in the School of International Letters & Cultures (SILC)**

### **Introduction**

In the USA today the largest ethnic group is formed by German Americans. Their heritage and that of other countries where German is spoken such as Austria and Switzerland reflect an extraordinary culture in the arts (Beethoven, Mozart, Goethe, Schiller, Brecht) and the sciences (Brothers Grimm, Einstein, Heisenberg, Kepler). The world's fourth-largest economy and respected leadership in the effort to solve global problems has given Germany a pre-eminent position in Europe and beyond. The German Program at ASU offers both a B.A. and an M.A. degree taught by dynamic, skillful professionals who are specialists in various aspects of German language, culture, linguistics/second-language acquisition and literature. Alumni of the German Program apply the knowledge acquired at ASU to careers in business, education, government, law, medicine, translating and many other fields.

The Program makes the following recommendations:

- ❖ All BHC students with a German major or minor or who are considering a major or minor in German should meet as soon as possible with an undergraduate advisor in the School of International Letters & Cultures such as Louis Wigley ([Louis.Wigley@asu.edu](mailto:Louis.Wigley@asu.edu)) or Barbara Fleming ([Barbara.Fleming@asu.edu](mailto:Barbara.Fleming@asu.edu)) **AND** with the BHC German Honors Advisor, John Alexander ([john.alexander@asu.edu](mailto:john.alexander@asu.edu)).
- ❖ Since entering students majoring in German are required to take SLC 201 (Introduction to Linguistics) and SLC 202 (Introduction to Literary/Cultural Theory), it is highly recommended that these two courses be taken before the end of the second year.
- ❖ All BHC students majoring or minoring in German should if possible participate in the ASU Regensburg Summer Program and/or in a semester- or year-long program offered through the Study Abroad Office at a university with which ASU has an exchange agreement.

### **Honors Enrichment Contracts**

Honors Enrichment Contracts represent the best opportunity to familiarize oneself with the German faculty and their research interests, with a view to securing a Committee Chair for the honors thesis. The goal of such a project is to move beyond the classroom requirements toward closer contact with the primary and/or secondary sources.

Courses available for Honors Enrichment Contracts may include:

GER 310	Advanced German Grammar
GER 311	German Conversation
GER 312	Readings in German Culture
GER 313	German Composition
GER 315	Germanic Mythology
GER 319	Business German
GER 421	War, Love and Sin in German Literature (theme-based exploration of German Literature, 800-1800)
GER 422	Survey of German Literature (theme-focused exploration of German Literature, 1800-)
GER 431	German Humor
GER 441	Fairy Tales
GER 445	Holocaust in German-Mediated Memory
GER 446	Weimar-Era German Film
GER 447	German Modernism
GER and/or SILC 494	Fourth-year special topics (e.g. Multikulti and Intercultural Competence, Modern German Culture)
SLC 450	Experimental Narrative

Any appropriate graduate courses

### **Guidelines for Honors Theses**

These guidelines are intended to facilitate the process of planning and completing an Honors thesis in the German Program. To successfully complete the thesis which represents the climax of a BHC major in German, a student must meet both German and BHC requirements.

1. Students wishing to write a thesis in the German Program must be German Majors or Minors. The thesis must be in the area of language, culture, linguistics/second-language acquisition or literature.
2. All Barrett students must complete a thesis/creative project information session prior to enrolling in thesis credit (492 or 493). This may be a workshop/session offered by Barrett or an on-line workshop offered via ASU Blackboard through Barrett. For further instructions, go to: <http://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/>
3. The Thesis Committee should be made up of the thesis director from the German Section (an ASU faculty-line member) and at least one other committee member who does not have to be an ASU lecturer or faculty-line member. TAs and graduate students may not serve on committees.
4. It is the student's responsibility to formulate the topic which will result in a thesis of **original** scholarship akin to but shorter and lighter than an M.A. thesis, to select a Chair in consultation with the BHC German Honors Advisor, to request another member to serve on her or his committee, to submit the necessary forms and to ascertain and inform the chair of the committee of all Honors College requirements and deadlines. The following represent a few examples for a suitable thesis topic:

- ❖ a translation of a German literary text along with a critical-analytical study;
  - ❖ How German is acquired as a second language;
  - ❖ Case studies in German linguistics;
  - ❖ the function of Germanic mythology in a film and/or a work of literature along with a theoretical component;
  - ❖ gender, minority or disability representations in print and visual media along with a theoretical component
5. An Honors Thesis Prospectus is to be submitted to the German Honors Advisor, John Alexander, by October 1 for a defense in the following spring semester, or by March 1 for a defense the following fall. The prospectus should contain the student's contact information, the topic as well as a working title for the thesis; it should list the Committee Chair and Second Reader, and indicate a tentative date (such as the month) for the defense. It is to be signed by the student, the Committee Chair and the Second Reader. This may be the same as the prospectus which the student submits to the Honors College, as long as it is in conformity with the requirements listed above.
  6. In the case of a multi-disciplinary thesis (e.g. BIS) where German is involved, the above guidelines will apply.

Below is a list of professors who work with Honors students.

**Carla Ghanem**, Assistant Professor (Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin):



Applied Linguistics, Teacher Training, Second Language Acquisition, Teaching culture and intercultural communicative competence, Language, Culture and Identity, German Film and Culture ([carla.ghanem@asu.edu](mailto:carla.ghanem@asu.edu))

**Daniel Gilfillan** Associate Professor (Ph.D., University of Oregon):  
Twentieth-Century German Literature, Information Literacy, German Film, Digital Culture, Hypertext Narrative, Technology in the Humanities, Media Studies (Honors thesis only) ([dgilfil@asu.edu](mailto:dgilfil@asu.edu)).



**Sara Lee** Lecturer (M.A. Michigan State University, 2002): Second language acquisition and second-language teaching, dyslexia, bilingual parenting ([sara.a.Lee@asu.edu](mailto:sara.a.Lee@asu.edu))



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