About the German BA/BS

The goal of the German major is to provide you with a robust knowledge of the cultures and histories of Germany and German-speaking countries from a global and transdisciplinary perspective. Knowledge of German provides access to a culture that for more than a millennium has been central to the history, economy, arts, and sciences not just of Europe but of Western civilization as a whole. In the contemporary world, German-speaking countries have Europe’s strongest economies and are playing an increasingly important role in world affairs. Because the percentage of Wisconsinites of German ethnic background surpasses that of every other state in the union, many of our students are motivated to study German by their desire to explore their own family’s heritage. UW–Madison has been a leader in the field of German studies for more than a century. Students also have an opportunity to participate in Stockwerk Deutsch, a residential learning community housed in Adams Residence Hall.

Requirements

German is a 27 credit major, designed to pair well with other majors and certificates. Students complete language studies through the advanced level, and complete courses in literature, culture, and history. Honors in the major is offered. For detailed information, see the Guide page.

The German certificate is 15 credits, at least two courses of which must be in Advanced German. Students pair this certificate with anything from Business majors to Political Science majors to pre-medicine work.

FAQS:

I’m interested but not ready to commit – what course should I try in the fall?

- Try German 267 – Yiddish Song and the Jewish Experience (Comm B, Ethnic). Or German 278 – Topics in German Culture (rotating subjects like Barbarian Life, German-American Heritage, Nazi Culture; no German experience required). Or German 275 – Kafka and the Kafkaesque.

What if I have previous experience with a language?

- Anyone with previous experience in German should take the UW-Madison placement test.

Are there study abroad opportunities?

- We strongly encourage a study abroad experience for our students! Our most popular program is the Academic Year in Freiburg where students can earn credits towards their German major and general education requirements.

Scholarships?

- The Undergraduate Awards Office, WiSH, and the German department all offer scholarships for outstanding students.

If you would like to know more, contact Joanna Schuth, GNS+ academic advisor, jschuth@wisc.edu, or make an appointment on Starfish.