



GERMANIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

The “Michigan model” of interdisciplinary German studies

Germanic Languages and Literatures (GLL) has a long and distinguished history at the University of Michigan. Today it holds a prominent and unique position in the field of German studies and embraces a strong vision for its place in the future of the discipline. GLL is one of the premier departments in the nation and has been particularly successful at establishing a paradigm of interdisciplinary German studies that has been called the “Michigan model.” Our undergraduate program is one of the few in the country offering language and cultural courses in Dutch and Scandinavian studies. Our success in creating institutionally flexible ways of crossing boundaries among departments and schools is without parallel at other institutions.

Germany has emerged as the strongest economy in Europe, and the state of Michigan has especially deep economic ties to the country. Not only is German one of the most important languages for business and engineering, it is among the most frequently required or recommended academic languages. German is also centrally important for gaining a first-hand, fundamental knowledge of the aesthetic, philosophical, and scientific foundations of modern thought. While language courses are recognized for encouraging students to explore other world views and to learn to think critically about culture, our graduate and undergraduate students also have the benefit of faculty with deep methodic training and experience in German and comparative literature, history, political science, film studies, linguistics, sociology, philosophy, business, and music. Many of our faculty members have joint appointments in corresponding departments—they are interdisciplinarians, which gives our students an even more comprehensive education. Graduates with a major in Germanic languages are prepared for a wide variety of careers in business, teaching, international health care, marketing, government, and international relations. In addition, the university provides ample opportunity for study abroad and immersion learning experiences, such as living in the Max Kade House.

Our vision of the future involves a continuing commitment to interdisciplinary study, even as we guide the department's transformation within a scholarly and pedagogical environment that is shifting toward increasingly international, comparative modes of study and scholarship. Our notion of German studies is keyed to this broad reconceptualization of the humanities, and also endeavors to make a contribution towards the larger field's still emerging shape. We strive to offer opportunities for intellectual exchange to our students and community through the German Studies Colloquium series, as well as seek support for undergraduate and graduate language learning opportunities.

UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE IN GERMAN FUND

Gifts of \$10,000 to \$50,000 annually will support cultural enrichment activities for students majoring and minoring in German with a particular focus on undergraduate students living in the Max Kade German House, the only living-learning language-based MLC (Michigan Learning Community) residence on campus. These activities may include: educational visits within the United States, as well as an annual study experience in a German or Austrian city; outreach events that engage our students with German culture and attract potential students to study German; and special project support for individuals or groups of students working on topics relating to German culture.

GERMAN STUDIES COLLOQUIUM

The German Studies Colloquium is an interdisciplinary forum for scholarship in German studies that is the intellectual nerve center of the department. This is the venue for the visits of speakers, writers, filmmakers and artists from across the U.S. and Europe. Every winter term, the German Studies Colloquium takes the form of a credit-bearing course for graduate students, entailing the above activities in addition to dissertation chapter presentations and professional development. The German Studies Colloquium has changed the face of graduate education and the intellectual profile of our department. It merits support to guarantee the continuation of these essential activities at a cost of \$10,000 to \$50,000 annually.

SCHOLAR/ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Contributions of \$10,000 to \$50,000 annually to this fund will support a scholar or artist in a creative area such as film culture, music, art, or museum studies to come for a week, a month, a term, or a year to offer one or two undergraduate courses in their field and to collaborate with faculty within GLL and across campus, or in support of on-campus creative scholarly activities associated with German studies, such as the bi-annual German Film Institute.

DUTCH STUDIES INITIATIVE

Dutch studies is growing and gifts of \$10,000 to \$50,000 are needed to provide support for instruction and curriculum development for additional courses, study abroad scholarships, cultural excursions and other activities. Gifts could be expendable or could be designated to help grow the Dutch Studies Endowment.

DUTCH STUDIES LECTURER

As the Dutch studies program grows, we seek endowed support of \$500,000 or \$25,000 annually for a permanent part-time lecturer. Such a position, in addition to the lecturer position already held within the department, would enable GLL to offer a minor in Dutch Studies, as we do in Scandinavian studies.

GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP

Our status as an internationally recognized leader in German studies attracts a pool of the best applicants in the field to our program. The competitiveness of our student funding packages and our ability to give students time to immerse themselves in study are the keys to bringing the very best of these students to Michigan. This fund allows us to give incoming graduate students one semester in their first year to immerse themselves in the intellectual life of the department by freeing them from teaching responsibilities. Students appreciate the chance to get their scholarly bearings in this crucial first year, knowing that their need to be trained as German teachers also will be fulfilled in the course of their program. Fellowships help offset the sometimes marked difference between the funding packages offered by heavily endowed private institutions and those available from a large, public institution such as ours, allowing us access to a large and diverse undergraduate student body. Your investment of \$1M endowed or \$50,000 annually will provide the funding needed for us to continue to offer these competitive fellowships.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities change lives. Wills, estate, and planned gifts allow you to create a lasting legacy that will enable the best and brightest minds to experience a liberal arts education, solve problems in a changing world, and yield ideas and innovations that will make a difference in Michigan and around the globe.

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“Following my sophomore year, I took advantage of the department’s study abroad offerings and made my way to Dresden for an intensive language course at Goethe-Institut followed by another intensive course at the Goethe-Institut at Schwäbisch Hall. Throughout these stints abroad, I experienced the unwavering support of the department, whose investment in both my academic and personal well-being was apparent.”

–Sarah Lime, current Ph.D. student, A.B. '19 German Honors, International Studies, and Women's Studies

