

Proposed Course that incorporates public programming:

“Denk ich an Deutschland...”: German Lyrical Poetry through the Centuries



Instructor: Dr. Christina J. Wegel

Office Hours: TBA in 442 Dey Hall

Office Phone: 919-843-8862

Email: wegel@email.unc.edu

Required Texts: (please make sure to purchase these editions as we will be referring to the pagination in class):

Books for Purchase:

- *Reclams großes Buch der deutschen Gedichte*, ed. Heinrich Detering (Reclam 2007; ISBN: 31 50 10 65 08)
- *Gedichte analysieren*, ed. Reinhard Marquäß (Duden 2007; ISBN: 34 11 70 14 39)

You are required to keep an organized folder of all additional texts and materials that pertain to this course.

Course Description:

The premise of the creative process component of this undergraduate course on German lyrical poetry will be the public reading and interpretation of selected poems in their original language, German. Well-known German-speaking poets such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Heinrich Heine, Gottfried Benn, Paul Celan and many more wrote poems on an array of cultural, personal, and political topics that thus allow for broader analyses and interpretations of textual, semantic, and historical aspects. In addition to reading and discussing numerous poems, we will listen to musical interpretations of these poems turned *Lieder* by famous composers such as Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, Gustav Mahler, and Hugo Wolf to name only a few. Through reciting, discussing and interpreting poems and *Lieder*, the students will be able to hone their linguistic abilities by learning to use their voice, movement, and gestures effectively in a foreign register. To this end, the students will rehearse the recitation of these poems under my guidance to successfully prepare for a public performance.

The goals for this advanced German course are thus manifold. Firstly, this course will engage in an in-depth study of various poems and *Lieder* from German-speaking countries. Secondly, the students will rehearse and publically recite poems and – if they happen to be musically inclined – *Lieder* in German at the end of the semester for a general audience on UNC campus. Either way, students will be asked to find musical pieces from German-speaking countries that will accompany their rendition of the poems. Thirdly, they will write their own poems and recite them for their classmates and a general audience.

To this end, this course will spend a considerable time on reciting selected poems by famous poets as well as the students' own poetry and since you will receive Experimental Education (EE) for this course, you are expected to participate in the public reciting/performance of selected poems. This public performance will be for an audience consisting of the general public and students from other literature courses in the German Department as part of a close collaboration between courses. Furthermore, we will be part of the yearly alumni and end-of-the-year reception of this department.

Thus, you will have to devote a minimum of 30 hours over the course of the semester preparing for it during our scheduled rehearsals and times that we will mutually agree upon. All readings, discussions, and rehearsals in German aim to enable them to examine, discuss, and critique poems and essays dealing with theoretical aspects of interpreting poems by a number of German-speaking poets and theoretical thinkers. In order to gain an insight into the creative and performative aspects of recitation, they will attend local performances, such as operas and plays. Writing assignments will consist of a mixture of literary, textual, and semantic analyses of primary and secondary literature, interpreting poems, as well as critiques of local performances.

Readings, class discussions, and all recitations are conducted in German.

Attendance Policy: Regular class attendance is a student obligation, and a student is responsible for all the work, including tests and written work, of all class meetings. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any given number of class meetings. If a student misses three consecutive class meetings, or misses more classes than I deem advisable, I may report the facts to the student's academic dean. However, only I excuse absences from class for valid reasons (such as illness or family emergency). A student should present his or her explanation for any absences to me at the next meeting. Students who are members of regularly organized and authorized University activities and who may be out of town taking part in some scheduled event are to be excused during the approved period of absence. Notification of such an absence must be sent by the responsible University official to the instructor before the date(s) of the scheduled absence. The University calendar does not recognize religious holidays. The faculty is encouraged to make reasonable accommodations for students requesting to miss class due to the observance of religious holidays.

Participation, Recitations, and Public Performance: I expect every student to participate fully to the best of their linguistic abilities in class discussions, during recitations, and thus be a true team player. This course is, unlike many other courses at many universities, built around the idea of engaged team work. Every individual member of our group depends on her or his team members. The public recitations will take on Sunday afternoon before the last week of classes as well as Monday evening of the last day of classes. Please be prepared to participate in a third performance at a date to be determined later.

Homework/Poetic Journal: Homework consists of preparation both in spirit and in writing. The students are required to keep a "poetic journal" (*Gedichtsjournal*). Entries into the *Gedichtsjournal* include:

- notes taken in class
- thoughts on and interpretations of poems

- their own poems

Original Poems: In addition to regular homework consisting of free interpretations of poems and brief comments on theoretical texts, the students will be required to write a total of ten (10) original poems. These poems will enjoy intensive reworking on the part of the poet (aka the student) based on openly shared, constructive criticism by their classmates and the instructor. The topics for the poems are open.

Essays: The students will be asked to attend at least one local theater or musical performance before Thanksgiving. The university and local theater groups in Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Durham, Raleigh as well as other places in the area offer a wide variety of performances that they can attend at no cost or for a minimal admissions fee (especially with your student ID). In response to this mandatory theatrical or musical visit they will have to write one critique of at least two pages in length, accompanied by the original play bill, and due one week after the performance (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font with standard margins). Furthermore, students will submit two formal interpretations of two separate poem of their choice that were read in class. Each interpretation will be two pages in length (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font with standard margins) and accompanied by a recorded reading of the poem by the student.

Mid-term Exam: The mid-term exam will allow students an opportunity to apply their knowledge gained during class discussions and to interpret one poem. Time TBA.

Final Exam: The final exam will pertain to the performance and the class discussions of the second half of the semester. Time TBA.

German Department Policy: The Department of Germanic Languages at UNC-CH stipulates that any student who fails both the midterm and the final exam will receive an F in the course. Any student who receives an F on the final exam will receive no higher than a C for the course. The course grade IN (Incomplete) cannot be given.

Email Policy: I will check my email daily Monday through Friday. Students can expect an answer to their emails within 24 hours during the week. During the weekend, however, I will not necessarily check my email.

Grading:

Active Participation in Class	15%
Practice Recitations and Public Performance	15%
Original Poems and <i>Gedichtsjournal</i>	20%
Two Interpretations of Poems	10%
One Performance Critique	5%
Written Homework	10%
Mid-term Exam	10%
Final Exam	15%