

REVIEW OF THE B.A. IN GERMAN

Classification of Instruction Programs (CIP) Code: 16.0501
German Language and Literature

OVERVIEW

The **B.A. in German** program at Illinois State University is housed in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures within the College of Arts and Sciences. The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures houses four degree programs: a B.A. in French and Francophone Studies, B.A. in German, a B.A. in Spanish, and M.A. in Language, Literatures, and Cultures. In addition, the department offers minors in Classical Studies, East Asian Studies, French and Francophone Studies, German, Italian Studies, and Spanish and an Instructional Technology in World Languages graduate certificate. The last review of the B.A. in German program occurred in 2013-2014.

The B.A. in German program offers a dynamic interdisciplinary lens for exploring the diverse cultural productions of the German speaking world: language, literature, the arts, politics, philosophy, and other fields of human inquiry and creative expression. Students engage closely with faculty in small seminars and regularly study abroad. Graduates in German studies demonstrate language proficiency, intercultural competencies, and analytical skills. Students enrolling in the B.A. in German select from either the German sequence or the German Teacher Education sequence.

Enrollment by Plan of Study, Fall Census Day, 2014-2021

B.A. in German, Illinois State University

First Majors Only

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
German sequence	7	3	6	5	3	3	6	2
German Teacher Education sequence	4	3	4	2	6	8	6	4
No subplan		7						
Total	11	13	10	7	9	11	12	6

Degrees Conferred by Plan of Study, 2014-2021

B.A. in German, Illinois State University

First Majors Only

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
German sequence	2		2	5	1	1		1
German Teacher Education sequence	1					1		
Total	3	2	2	5	1	2	0	1

Table notes: Graduating Fiscal Year consists of summer, fall, and spring terms, in that order. For example, Graduating Fiscal Year 2019 consists of the following terms: summer 2017, fall 2017, and spring 2018.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY REPORT

Program goals

The B.A. in German provides students with advanced language skills and knowledge of German culture, literature, language, and pedagogy. These skills and knowledge will enable them to be intelligent and responsible citizens of a globalized world and to successfully pursue careers in teaching, business, government, or non-governmental organizations.

Student learning outcomes

The student will demonstrate:

1. competency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading German;
2. knowledge and critical understanding of the literature, culture, society, and history of the German-speaking countries;
3. application of knowledge and critical understanding of German-speaking literature, culture, society, and history to the individual student's personal and professional plans;
4. In the case of teacher education majors knowledge of current theories, methods and issues in foreign language education and professional journals and organization/sources; competency in critical thinking about those theories, methods and issues; and successful practical application of their knowledge and skills in classes, clinical experiences and student teaching.

Program curriculum (2021-2022)

Graduation requirements (General German sequence):

120 credit hours including 35 credit hours for the degree program and 39 credit hours for General Education. The 35 credit hours for the degree program include 35 credit hours of German.

Graduation requirements (German Teacher Education sequence):

120 credit hours including 67 credit hours for the degree program and 39 credit hours for General Education. The 67 credit hours for the degree program include 26 credit hours of German courses, 6 credit hours of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures courses, 9 credit hours of German elective courses, and 26 credit hours of professional education courses external to the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures.

Program delivery

The program is offered on the Normal campus.

The program is delivered primarily through face-to-face instruction.

Department faculty (Fall 2021)

16 tenure track faculty members (8 Professors, 7 Associate Professors, and 1 Assistant Professors)

13 non-tenure track faculty members (9 full-time, 4 part-time, totaling 11.4 FTE)

Undergraduate student to faculty ratio: 4 to 1

Undergraduate student to tenure-line faculty ratio: 7 to 1

Specialized accreditation

The German Teacher Education sequence in the B.A. in German program, as one of the teacher education programs at Illinois State University, is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The last accreditation review was conducted in October 2019, and the University successfully met all five of the national standards for educator preparation. The German teacher education sequence is also approved by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), a specialized professional association affiliated with

CAEP. The teacher education sequence is subject to annual review and approval by the Illinois State Board of Education. There is no specialized accreditation for the non-teaching sequence in the German program.

Changes in the academic discipline, field, societal need, and program demand

At other institutions in the state and across the country, German programs have shifted emphases to accommodate cultural, economic, and socio-political changes by offering multi- or interdisciplinary majors such as German Studies which include courses from other disciplines. The German faculty has initiated an even more versatile and broader interdisciplinary B.A. Program in European Studies to attract a highly motivated, internationally oriented group of students to Illinois State University and to complement an individual student's interests in various fields of study (see Section V). The European Studies major is taught by a wide range of faculty in various departments and co-exists with the current German program. To broaden the scope and appeal of the program, the faculty intend to ultimately transition from a primarily disciplinary to a more interdisciplinary perspective by allowing students to incorporate a set number of German related courses from across the disciplines into the German major.

Responses to previous program review recommendations

In their Review Outcome of 2014, the Academic Planning Committee commended the German program particularly for its well-developed assessment plan resulting in curricular changes to ensure sustainable viability of the program and in a clearer focus without sacrificing program quality. The program faculty members were also commended for their contributions to the discipline at the national and international levels through their numerous scholarly accomplishments during the last program review period. Since the last review, the German program continued to build on its successes and addressed the Committee's recommendations as follows:

1. To continue making further program improvements on the basis of the student learning outcomes assessment plan by further adjusting the curriculum to meet student needs and changes in the discipline. To increase flexibility in responding to student interest and needs and to ensure cultural and linguistic diversity as well as a greater coherence within the German curriculum, faculty created a new topics course at the 200-level (GER 285, similar to the existing 385 course) which can be offered each semester and repeated with different course content. In addition, and in order to improve both the instruction and student performance in German 115-116 (incl. speaking skills), the faculty redesigned the second-year level as a sequence with a focus on specific topics using a course pack featuring selected authentic German texts and films as primary materials in conjunction with a grammar textbook as well as midterm oral tests and end-of-the semester presentations.

2. To provide additional General Education course options. During the past review cycle, the German faculty has been deeply involved again in the general education program. In addition to teaching German 115 and 116 (in the Middle Core of the general education program) each academic year, faculty also continued to teach Literary Narrative (World Literature), designed as a large lecture class with small discussion sessions for more individualized attention. The faculty value their involvement in general education as an opportunity to share their knowledge and expertise with cohorts of the student population they would not otherwise meet in their classes and to balance the smaller class sizes of the German major courses.

With regard to additional General Education course options, the most important achievement of this review period has been the establishment of the European Studies program. Faculty from German and History collaborated with colleagues from across the university in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, and Fine Arts. German faculty proposed teaching European languages within a broader interdisciplinary context across the university and created both a European Studies minor and then a major (the B.A. program in European Studies, approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in 2017) as an innovative model in the state of Illinois that does not require a new department but rather draws on the expertise of numerous departments across three colleges and is housed in History. The new program allows students to develop language skills and core knowledge while exploring their particular interests in interdisciplinary ways. German faculty have become members of the core faculty and Executive Committee and are currently teaching IDS 212 (Europe Today) as one of the three European Studies core courses once each academic year, alternating with colleagues in History.

3. To increase the percentage of students studying abroad. The German study abroad program continues to attract German majors and minors on a regular basis who typically attend one of the Illinois State University partner institutions in Germany (at the University of Bonn or Paderborn, the latter being predominantly chosen by students of International Business with German as their minor) either for a full academic year or for the Spring semester. Between Spring 2014 and Spring 2020 twenty-one German majors and minors have studied abroad. Nevertheless, since the recent termination of the Junior Year/Study Abroad Program at the University of Bonn, the German faculty is currently exploring Bonn's new bilateral Global Exchange Program for international students with many course choices in both German and English which may also offer General Education equivalences as an additional incentive for students. In order to further increase the number of students studying abroad, the program also intend to expand semester abroad options and started to communicate with the program director for the Academic Year in Freiburg program which is administered in the US by UW-Madison.

4. To finalize an exchange agreement with the University of Paderborn for availability of at least one native-speaking graduate assistant each year. The German faculty finalized an exchange agreement with the University of Paderborn in 2013 which proved to be a great asset for both faculty and students. The exchange provided the program between Fall 2013 and Spring 2020 with eight native speaking graduate assistants with instruction of first-year German courses and greatly increased conversation and co-curricular opportunities for students.

Major findings

The German B.A. at Illinois State University continues to attract excellent students, enhances their job opportunities and has experienced stability while other programs in Illinois have been suspended. It remains the only baccalaureate program at Illinois public universities to still offer a strictly German major and has consistently ranked high with respect to quality. The success rates among teacher-education students in the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) remains high. Although the current enrollments may seem low, the University has based its continual support of the German program on three primary reasons. The program continues to serve second majors and minors (in particular students in International Business and History) who consider German language skills and cultural knowledge as an asset for future employment. The program also continues to provide courses for the large number of non-German majors who are seeking to meet college language requirements. In addition, the implementation of further curricular changes along with an exchange agreement with the University of Paderborn (thereby adding to the international dimension of Illinois State University's mission) and most importantly the creation of the interdisciplinary B.A. Program in European Studies in response to the 2013-2014 program review, has further enhanced the sustainability of the program and broadened the reach of German study at the university.

Students enrolled in the newly approved major in the European Studies program will develop high-level proficiency in a European language other than English (equivalent to five semesters of university-level coursework plus one semester of Study Abroad) to the benefit of all languages taught in the Department. Furthermore, the electives (18 hours) include, in addition to 200 and 300 level courses in German, French or Spanish, instruction in history, literature, culture, and arts which will develop students' understanding of the cultural contexts associated with their chosen language. At present, 26 minors (4 minors from German) and 2 majors in History (so far neither of them have identified a secondary major) are enrolled in the European Studies program even though the demand for its core courses such as Europe Today is high and appeals to a great number of students as an elective for general education requirements (two sections with 30 students fill each semester with additional demands for overrides). Since the new interdisciplinary European Studies major and minor will allow students to fit these degrees into their other degree programs, it is not unreasonable to expect a significant increase in double majors and minors to the mutual gain of both B.A. programs in German and European Studies at the time of its full implementation (in the 5th year).

In addition to the German contributions to this unique and distinctive major in the state of Illinois, the strengths of the German program further include high quality instruction in German language, literature, and culture by two professors with strong records as both teachers and scholars who are truly invested in their students and in the German program. Illinois State's small and highly compacted program allows for close relationships among students and between students and professors with a positive effect on ample opportunities for class discussions and

individualized attention. The loss of two faculty members through retirement in 2018 with only one tenure-track replacement, however, has affected the program negatively with regard to the amount and diversity of course offerings and is currently also limiting contributions to the B.A. in European Studies and the General Education program overall. With an added full-time instructor, the program would not only be able to broaden and strengthen both the disciplinary and interdisciplinary scope and appeal of the German program and increase double majors. It would also allow the program to further increase present input in general education and in European Studies in particular. A stronger involvement of German faculty and their specific knowledge in the new interdisciplinary B.A. program (including the teaching of new topics such as the literature, culture, and history in Europe of the Middle Ages by our German medievalist), would not only broaden the reach of German study and enhance the variety of topics courses in the European Studies program but add a global dimension to the university's curriculum as well.

Initiatives and plans

1. Increase the flexibility and interdisciplinary scope of the German major. The faculty intends to realign the program to adjust to changes in the discipline and societal need. The program will shift emphases by starting to offer some coursework in English to expand the reach of German Study to other departments and to serve as electives for the General Education program. Ultimately, the disciplinary German program will transition to German Studies (incorporation of a set number of German-related courses from across the disciplines into the German major), thereby providing students with a multi- or interdisciplinary education, broadening their skill-set and increasing their employability in a changing economy and society that calls for additional abilities.

2. Amplify the contribution to the general education program. In order to design a more flexible German major at Illinois State University by both expanding the reach of German Studies and increasing its interdisciplinary perspective, the faculty intends to ultimately transition to a German Studies major. As an initial step, however, the faculty plan to offer some topics courses such as History of the German Language and German Film in English so that they will serve both as a requirement for the major and as an elective for General Education requirements. Above all, the German faculty plans to intensify its vital contribution to the teaching of a variety of courses in the European Studies program and submit a request for hiring a full-time instructor.

3. Expand study-abroad options. To further increase the number of students studying abroad, the faculty plans to expand the semester abroad options after the recent termination of the Junior Year/Study Abroad Program at the University of Bonn. Bonn's new bilateral Global Exchange Program for International Students with many course choices in both German and English looks promising and may also offer general education equivalences as an additional incentive for students. In addition, the program will explore the Academic Year in Freiburg program as another study-abroad alternative to the Universities in Bonn and Paderborn.

PROGRAM REVIEW OUTCOME AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures houses four degree programs: a B.A. in French and Francophone Studies, B.A. in German, a B.A. in Spanish, and M.A in Language, Literatures, and Cultures. In addition, the department offers minors in Classical Studies, East Asian Studies, French and Francophone Studies, German, Italian Studies, and Spanish, and an Instructional Technology in World Languages graduate certificate. The B.A. in German program offers a dynamic interdisciplinary lens for exploring the diverse cultural productions: language, literature, the arts, politics, philosophy, and other fields of human inquiry and creative expression. Students enrolling in the B.A. in German select from either the German sequence or the German Teacher Education sequence. The Academic Planning Committee recognizes that many of the efforts and activities that led to the development of the self-report were accomplished during the time-period coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The committee thanks program faculty for their critical self-reflections about the current state of their program. The committee notes that the program's enrollments have remained very small during the period covering the program review (from 11 in 2014, dropping below 10 in 2017 and 2018, but recovering to 12 in 2020). While these declines in enrollments are consistent with other language programs nationally, they need to improve to sustain the program. The program faculty state that they hope to double these numbers during the next period of review, however there

were no specific details presented about a plan for how this will be accomplished. The committee notes that the program has only two remaining tenure track faculty resulting from retirements during the period of review. The committee commends these faculty for their commitment to continued scholarship, while simultaneously shouldering heavy teaching and service commitments. Furthermore, the faculty are commended for their continued support of co-curricular activities for students in the program as well as their work to infuse issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the program curriculum. The committee further commends the program faculty for their support of and participation in institutional programs (e.g., European Studies, General Education, and AMALI).

While recognizing the B.A. in German program has strengths, the committee is concerned about many aspects regarding the current state of the program and several of these issues that were highlighted in the self-study. The self-study report is candid in its recognition of the need to further evaluate the program considering these challenges as well as changes in national and disciplinary trends. Therefore, the Academic Planning Committee flags the B.A. in German program for further review. The committee requests that the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures take the following actions and submit the following reports based on those actions.

Report 1: Due December 15, 2023

Submit to the Academic Planning Committee via the Office of the Provost.

Develop a new Strategic Plan. The committee asks that the faculty engage in strategic planning discussions and develop a new strategic plan for the program. In addition to standard elements of a strategic plan (e.g., vision, mission, core values, program goals, strategies, and tactics), the committee asks that it includes data informed elements to address the areas related to the other follow-up requests. The plan should include discussion about how the program interrelates with other programs in the department regarding goals, curriculum, and faculty. As part of this planning, the committee asks that the program faculty conduct an analysis of how limited faculty resources are related to curricular offerings (both what is the impact of low resources and what could be done with more resources). The committee also recommends that the program faculty analyze the impact the creation of the European Studies major has had on the German program. Accordingly, the committee asks the faculty to engage in discussions of this plan and to summarize the findings of those discussions in a report submitted to the Office of the Provost.

Develop a plan for recruitment and enrollment growth. The committee supports faculty efforts to explore further expansion of program enrollment. The committee asks the program faculty to develop and implement a plan for student recruitment and use of scholarships. The plan should include an analysis of what target population(s) is the program designed to serve. It should also include strategies for increasing enrollment by students from racial and ethnic groups traditionally underrepresented in the program and discipline. The committee asks that the program work with University Marketing and Communications and their college marketing director to pursue marketing strategies that target students from a variety of demographic groups. The committee asks the program faculty to evaluate the effects of recruitment efforts on enrollment and, in turn, on the ability of the program to provide high-quality education.

Complete a review and evaluation of the curriculum. The self-study report identifies some initiatives related to the program curriculum. The committee asks that the program faculty consider these as part of a comprehensive review and evaluation of the curricula across both sequences, and to examine the impact of already implemented changes, as well as to develop a plan for necessary further revisions. We note that the self-study reports that many program graduates end up working in the business sector. The committee suggests that the program faculty consider developing collaborations with programs within the College of Business. We ask that these discussions involve both internal and external stakeholders as well as comparisons with the curricula of programs at comparator and aspirational institutions. Accordingly, the committee asks the faculty to engage in discussions of this plan and to summarize the findings of those discussions in a report submitted to the Office of the Provost.

Comparator and aspirational program analyses. The self-study report provides a brief quantitative analysis of comparator institutions, however, no conclusions or actions are made regarding these comparisons. The committee has included analyses of comparator and aspirational programs in the self-study report guidelines to provide faculty

Program review conducted 2021-2022. Report submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Fall 2022

with opportunities to consider the niche their program has among its peers and to gather information for program planning. The committee asks the program to revisit these sections of the self-study and address this section through expanded analyses of comparator and aspirational programs, including aspirational programs nationwide, that could help to develop strategies for addressing priority initiatives for the programs. Such enrollments could also enhance the program's goals for diversity and inclusion.

Report 2: Due October 1, 2024

Submit to the Academic Planning Committee via the Office of the Provost.

The Academic Planning Committee asks the Department of Languages, Literature, and Cultures to submit an update regarding actions that the faculty have taken in continuing to offer the B.A. in German program, either in their current forms or in modified forms, or actions faculty have taken to disestablish the programs. The committee asks the department to submit the report to the committee via the Office of the Provost by October 1, 2024.

The report should address:

- Strategic plan
- Recruitment and enrollment growth.
- Comparator and aspirational program analyses.
- Changes to the curriculum and impact of these changes.