

GERMAN PROGRAM AT SKIDMORE

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2022



ALLES, NUR NICHT LANGWEILIG: DEUTSCH

WORDS OF WELCOME

Herzlich Willkommen und Guten Tag!

The German Program at Skidmore College looks back at another great year of community-building and educating events, fun activities, and amazing achievements by students and faculty. Though still masked indoors, we are back in-person, and were able to enjoy some celebratory dinners and receptions together towards the end of the year. It was a special year indeed: With Professor O'Brien gone and being on sabbatical in California, Professor

Wunsch covered all German classes and organized all events for the program. Nevertheless, the German Program welcomed four new majors and several minors, had full beginners classes, and offered events and informational workshops throughout the year. We even got new stickers, magnets, and cups! Watch out for a T-Shirt design contest coming next semester! But for now, enjoy our newsletter, and don't miss the links to all the amazing student projects from the past year!

GERMAN PROGRAM
NEWSLETTER

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After 32 years happily teaching German at Skidmore College, I have decided to retire and start a new chapter in life. I am so grateful for being able to work with such talented students over the years. It has been a joy from start to finish. I remember so clearly how excited I was on my very first day on campus in September 1990, when I sat at a long table in Case Center reading a book before teaching my first class. A young student named Kat sat across from me and said to her friends that she was so excited because there was a new German teacher and she wondered what she would be like. I interrupted the conversation and said "Oh, that's me!" and we all laughed. I figured Skidmore must be the right place for me if students were that excited about learning German. I have never been disappointed on that score. I have taught at five

different universities and while each student body has positive traits, Skidmore students are the most creative, the most likely to think outside the box, and the most fun to work with because they have a great sense of humor and a willingness to try something new. Working with you has kept me young at heart.

As you all know, one of my favorite courses to teach is Baby Deutsch. Guiding students as they struggle with the complexities and oddities of German (Why are there so many different pronouns called "sie"? Why are there so many words for "the" – der, die, das, den, dem?). It was such a pleasure seeing my students engage in a sustained conversation in German at the end of just one semester. The fact that 101 students can play an hour-long game of Jeopardy completely in German is miraculous and something to be very proud of. My other passions were teaching writing to advanced students in Composition, Creative Writing and Senior Thesis (over 30 times) as well as various courses on German Film, 20th-Century Literature, GDR Literature, and Contemporary Literature.



Senior Seminar is such a fun class because after learning German for nearly 3 1/2 years and most likely studying abroad, students can engage in debates, creative projects, read the great works of German literature, and analyze cinematic masterpieces with insight and rigor. One example of a memorable capstone project was in 2004, when German majors Katie, Lilly, Nick, and Anna, wrote, directed, and starred in a 20-minute film in German. The comedy *Goodbye Deutsch* tells how Skidmore banned the German language because it wasn't beautiful, it was full of guttural sounds that created too much phlegm, and it wasn't conducive to creativity. The fantastic 4 started a secret society dedicated to preserving German language and culture but Campus Security arrested them and brought them to the new president's office. President Glotzbach planned to punish the rebels but they caught him quoting Immanuel Kant in German. After locating his secret closet full of German books, art, Fußball-Bundesliga T-shirts, and a photo of him in Salzburg, German is restored to its rightful place of honor at Skidmore. Once again students can wear dirndls and lederhosen and read German in the open.





Perhaps one of the most difficult and rewarding teaching experiences was team-teaching Travel Seminars. In 2008 I taught *From Marx to Coca-Cola* with Prof. Ela Lepkowska-White, where we met Solidarity leader Lech Walensa in Gdansk, met young business leaders in Warsaw, traveled to Greifswald on the Baltic for lectures by GDR architects and then traveled to Berlin where we met a man who dug three escape tunnels under the Berlin wall and toured the Stasi secret prison in Hohenschönhausen with a former inmate. I also had the pleasure of teaching *Coffeeshouses, Waltzes, and Dreams* in Vienna in 2012 with Prof. James Kennelly and in 2015 with Prof. Karin Hamm-Ehsani. Highlights included waltz lessons, an art workshop in the Albertina Museum, Escape the Room (no one escaped), baking lessons in Schönbrunn Castle, excursions to Melk and the memorial site of Mauthausen, meeting the Vienna Boys Choir members after they sang at Sunday Mass, eating Spätzle, and visiting the United Nations.



In a small section like German, extracurricular events are so important to build a sense of community, a feeling of home on campus. The biweekly *Kaffeestunde*, annual *Sachertorte* flown in from Vienna for Exploremore, the Festival of Lights in December, T-Shirt contest, Rapper poetry workshop with two Berlin Hip-hop



artists followed by a concert, the many Romantic Salon - *Liederabend* performances with Senior Artist in Residence Sylvia Stoner-Hawkins (who was my student long ago), are fond memories of all the things we did to share our love of German outside the classroom. Your laughter, good cheer, and joy in learning will remain in my heart.



As a film scholar I had the great opportunity to travel all around the world with the support of Skidmore, giving lectures in Germany, France, Israel, Ireland, Scotland, Australia, Canada, and England. Moreover, I had the privilege of attending the Berlinale film festival almost every year. In my retirement, I will devote myself to gardening, walking around the neighborhood with my new puppy Daisy (2 weeks old in photo), hanging out with my husband Joe at the beach, and visiting with my family. You can find me in my new library working on my third book, *Unrealized Dreams: Redefining the Margins of Defa Cinema*. As I pass the baton, I know I am leaving the German program in good hands with



my wonderful colleague, Prof. Juliane Wuensch. I hope you stay in touch. Ich danke Euch für die schöne Zusammenarbeit und gute Erinnerungen. Alles Gute und Auf Wiedersehen!

A Message from Professor Juliane Wuensch

The past year was very special for me, because I had agreed to lead the German Program by myself while my colleague Professor Mary-Beth O'Brien was on sabbatical. I knew it would mean more work and a teaching overload, but I also saw it as opportunity to get to know all the students personally who are taking German classes. Together with German Major Emma Stratman, who supported me throughout the year as Research Assistant, the German Program can look back at a year with many accomplishments (about which you can read in this newsletter). I am very proud that the program continues to grow and attract students with new course offerings, as well as with college-wide events, such as the World Language Halloween festival and our biweekly Kaffeestunde. I was surprised to discover that there are many more German speakers at Skidmore, who usually do not enroll in our language classes, but are drawn to special topics, such as the course "Fairy Tales for the Modern World," which I offered for the first time in Spring 22. The course was a huge success, and the students, once more, astonished me with their creativity and critical-thinking skills. Another highlight of the academic year was graduation and the many events surrounding it. I am sad to say goodbye to five graduating seniors, some of which have taken classes with me every semester since I arrived at Skidmore in Fall 2020. However, I am happy to see them continue their path of learning and loving the German language and culture, and I am proud that I was able to do my part as a teacher and motivate them to look beyond difficult grammar structures or seemingly nonsensical compound-words. I am very thankful to Professor O'Brien for all the wonderful work that she has done during her time at Skidmore, because the program that she has ultimately left me, now that she decided to retire, is not only thriving, but also a vital part of the Skidmore community and the Department of World Languages and Literatures. I am looking forward to continuing the good work that she started, and I am excited for all the new things - and colleagues! - the future will bring.



NEWS & EVENTS

Spieleabend

In October, the German Program invited everyone to a game night, which was full of fun card games, such as "Kampfrommé," board games, such as "Mensch ärgere dich nicht," and dice games, such as "Kniffel."



Schnipseljagd

October was packed with cool events, for example our annual hike through Skidmore's Northwoods. The hike included small riddles and nature tasks and was suitable for German learners of all levels.



NEWS & EVENTS

Halloween Festival

We ended the month of October with a department-wide, week-long event: the **World Language Halloween Festival**. Each language section prepared one evening that presented scary traditions, stories, and movies. The German Program started the night by reading German Ghost Stories and then we watched the Horror Cult-Classical Silent Movie "Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari."



Kaffeestunde

Every other week throughout the semester, students and friends of the German language met to chat in German, drink coffee and tea, and enjoy cookies and chocolate during our traditional Kaffeestunde. A special highlight was our Christmas-themed Kaffeestunde with decorations, music, and fun puzzles!

NEWS & EVENTS

Film Festival

The Spring Semester brought us the long-awaited **World Language Film Festival**. Every evening for one week, the Skidmore community could watch another international short film or documentary. The German Program started the festival with two short films: *Rocks* (2001) and *Parvaneh* (2012). All screenings had English subtitles, so that everybody interested could enjoy the creative and thought-provoking features.

WORLD LANGUAGE FILM FESTIVAL

THE GERMAN PROGRAM PRESENTS:

MONDAY, 2/21
PMH 202, 6-7 PM
SCREENED IN GERMAN
WITH ENGLISH
SUBTITLES



DAS RAD
CHRIS STENNER, ARVID UIBEL
AND HEIDI WITTINGER'S

Rocks (2001):
In this animated short film two rocks, Hew and Kew, watch the developments of human civilization change the world around them

Parvaneh (2012):
An Afghan immigrant living in rural Switzerland must go to Zurich to earn money to support her father



PARVANEH
EN FILM VON TALEBANI HANZAI

GERMAN PROGRAM

JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3RD, IN PMH 426 4-5 PM

COME PLAY TRIVIA,
LEARN ABOUT THE
GERMAN MAJOR
AND MINOR, AND
FIND OUT ABOUT
STUDY ABROAD
OPPORTUNITIES!



DID YOU KNOW?

German is the second most commonly used scientific language! Germany is the third-largest contributor to scientific research and development.



DID YOU KNOW?

130 million people speak German! It's an official language in seven countries, and is the most widely spoken mother language in the European Union.



DID YOU KNOW?

The printing press was invented in Germany in 1436. Today, 18% of the world's books are published in German.

EXPLOREMORE

ExploreMore

Just like every year, Skidmore ExploreMore combined info sessions about degree requirements for majors and minors with fun activities. The German Program organized an afternoon with Trivia, and a chance to win one of our newly designed cups!



NEWS & EVENTS: NEW COURSES & STUDENT PROJECTS

Fairy Tales for the Modern World (WLG 263)



In Spring 2022, the German Program offered a new special topics course for intermediate and advanced German learners: a fairy tale class that explored and compared the original tales and their more contemporary adaptations. The course was a great outlet for the creativity of the students, who were able to reimagine their favorite fairy tales from different perspectives and with a modern twist.



Students in the Fairy Tale class work together on an assignment to show the connections between the people in Otfried Preußler's dark tale "Krabat".

STUDENT PROJECTS

FALL 2021

Check out some of the amazing final projects from students in **Introduction to German Literature**:

- *Bonkrecht und Mila* (inspired by Wilhelm Busch)-Video, Text, and Illustrations by Leonie Aksyonov <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5bTauFELLo>
- *Der Nymphantanz* (inspired by the Loreley myth)-Text and Collage by Emma Stratman (picture on the right)
- *Das Geschäft* (inspired by Rilke)-Text and Embroidery by Sam Allman (next page)



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Here are the links to all the fantastic, creative final projects of students from **Fairy Tales for the Modern World**. The students rewrote a classical tale for our modern times and added illustrations.

- [Lyo Coleman and Sophia Delohery-Die Bremer Stadtmusikanten](#)
- [Kira Molnar and Zach Searight-Von dem Mäuschen, dem Vögelchen und der Bratwurst](#)
- [Leonie Aksyonov and Maria Budsey-Gretchenputtel](#)
- [Emma Stratman, Sam Allman, McKenna Otey-Schlaraffenland](#)

STUDENT PROJECTS

Das Geschäft von Samantha Allman (Final Project for Intro to German Literature, Fall 2021)

Mit gefalteter Hose und hängenden Hemden
Verkauft das Geschäft Kleidung jeder Sorte
In vielen Farben kommt es von vielen Orten.
Die Firmen lagerten die Arbeit aus, die Orte sind fremde.
Zwar manche Dinge sind recycelt oder nachhaltig,
Doch alle können die Umwelt zerstören.
Eine neue gelbe Regenjacke kann das Klima verändern.
Aber nur ein neuer Pullover ist nicht so gewaltig.
Da geht ein Käufer, mit einer großen Tüte.
Sein Gesicht ist leer, als er an den hellen Geschäften vorbeifährt.
Er denkt nicht an die Langlebigkeit oder die Güte.
Er hat mit sich ein Kind, das hat lange lockige Haare.
Sie trägt ein schönes rotes Kleid.
Sie denkt nicht an die Zukunft; sie lebt zu wenige Jahre.
Aber nur ein neuer Pullover ist nicht so gewaltig.
Viel mehr Menschen gehen vorbei
Und Kinder, naiv und glücklich
Die Geschäfte leuchten immer; sie scheinen fehlerfrei.
Die Umwelt zu schützen, ist weder modisch noch erschwinglich.
Und nur ein neuer Pullover ist nicht so gewaltig.
Und die Menschen gehen und eilen zu kaufen
Immer neue Kleidung um die alte zu verschwenden.
Die Firmen versuchen das Problem zu ersticken,
Die Arbeit und den Müll in andere Länder zu schicken.
Die Menschen können nicht sehen die großen Müllhaufen.
Sie lösen das Problem nicht, sie wollen immer laufen.
Niemand will es sagen--aber das Problem kann uns beenden.



ACHIEVEMENTS & CONGRATULATIONS

SPRING 2022



CONGRATULATIONS



Roman Toepler
2022



Alex Sinclair
2022



Samantha Allman
2023



Lyo Coleman
2024



Emma Stratman
2024

NEW DELTA PHI ALPHA MEMBERS!



DELTA PHI ALPHA INDUCTION CEREMONY

SPRING 2022

In the Spring semester 2022, the German Honor Society Delta Phi Alpha welcomed five new members from Skidmore College: Emma Stratman, Samantha Allman, Lyo Coleman, Alex Pfeifer Sinclair, and Roman Toepler (photo on the right, from left to right).



In a small ceremony, the students shared some German texts that have a special meaning for them and connect them to the language and culture. Emma shared Goethe's "Prometheus", Sam "Das Karussell" by Rainer Maria Rilke, Lyo "Alles neu" by Peter Fox, Alex "Werther" by Goethe, and Roman "Die drei Pfannekuchen", his favorite childhood story.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

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LEONIE

Through the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste), I have been placed with Diakoniewerk Simeon Wohnstättenwerk in Berlin, where I will be working with people with disabilities. My position will include assisting with activities during the day, supporting clients with meals and creativity groups, planning excursions and activities, and working with participants to develop biographical works on their childhoods and life experiences. Because of COVID-19, I have been unable to go abroad thus far, but am looking forward to finally spending the year practicing my German and experiencing the culture.



ELEYNA

After spending the summer after graduation at home in Massachusetts, I traveled to Austria to begin my job as a Fulbright native speaker in high school English classrooms. I live in Vienna and commute to work in two different schools in Wiener Neustadt, an adorable little city in Lower Austria. The work is so fulfilling, and I love living here, so next year I'm coming back to work in two schools right in the center of Vienna. My students are so excited to connect with me and learn about the US, and my teachers have gone above and beyond in welcoming me. I've made friends from all over the world through Fulbright, and I've made Austrian friends through my roommates and a weekly cafe meetup for queer women in the city. The German program at Skidmore fostered my excitement for cultural exchange, my confidence in unfamiliar territory, and, of course, my German language ability. These skills have empowered me to connect with the local culture here in Austria, and I'm thrilled to know that I'll be coming back next year.

ACHIEVEMENTS & CONGRATULATIONS

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WAS MACHEN WIR WÄHREND
DER FERIEN?

SUMMER ABROAD



SAM

Heidelberg

I will be studying in Heidelberg this August! I visited Heidelberg several years ago and really liked the atmosphere of the area around the university. I'm super excited to get to experience it as a student there! I'm most looking forward to improving my language skills and getting to see more of Germany and Europe.



MASON

Vienna

I'm traveling to Vienna. I love the architecture, the rich history, and the music. I'm looking forward to sitting in Cafes and drinking coffee!



CHLOE

Freiburg

I am studying in Freiburg, Germany! I chose this location because it is a city close to my family's home city of Stuttgart. I am looking forward to using my German in day-to-day life and being close to family.

ACHIEVEMENTS & CONGRATULATIONS

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The German Program said goodbye to five graduating German Minors in 2022: Leonie Aksyonov, Maria Budsey, Lizzie Bourdelais, Roman Toepler, and Milo Dandy. Alex Pfeifer Sinclair, who is part of the German Honor Society also graduated this year. Leonie, Lizzie, and Roman plan on going to Germany after the summer to work, study, and explore. Maria, Milo, and Alex hope to use their German skills in their new jobs. We wish you all the best for the future!



Photo 1 (top): Professor Wuensch with Leonie, Maria, and Roman at the World Language Senior Dinner

Photo 2: Leonie, Lizzie, Maria, and Alex with their German Graduation Cords.

Vielen Dank, viel Erfolg und alles Gute!