

Centre for Modern European Languages, Literatures and Culture Studies
Bhasha-Bhavana, Visva-Bharati

Syllabus of German: MA

MA in German: Semester I

Course I: Introduction to Linguistics.

Objective: Definition and objective of linguistics (Phonology, Morphology, Syntax etc.).

Learning outcome: As a learner of a foreign language, developing a critical insight into the science of language.

Course 2: Literature, Society and History of Ideas (1): Antiquity to Enlightenment.

Objective: Students re-acquaint themselves with and critically re-assess the knowledge about culture, society and seminal ideas of Europe by reading selections from canonical texts from the historical periods.

Learning outcome: Awareness of the philosophical, cultural, political and socio-economic underpinnings of European civilization.

Course 3: Theories of Literature 1: From Plato to the Romantics.

Objective: Students read and discuss canonical works of literary criticism as well as works that have defined the course of literature and literary criticism in Europe from Plato to the Romantics. Special emphasis is given to the period defined by Goethe and Schiller.

Learning outcome: Developing a critical understanding of theoretical discussions of literature and other arts.

Course 4 (Optional 1): Specialized Study of Authors (I).

Objective: The Course-in-Charge will select an author / authors for detailed study. A representative selection of works will be read and discussed. Biographical research, history of reception and critical studies of the author's / authors' works will be an integral part of this course.

Learning outcome: Ability to read independently and critically the works of an author and to relate the biographical, historical, political and social background of the author comprehensively.

Course 4 (Optional 2): Women's Writing in German.

Objective: Students will discuss a selection of texts written in German by women authors from the early 19th to the 21st century. The students will examine whether a specifically feminine / feminist perspective marks out these literatures and whether such a perspective determines the relationship of these works to the socio-cultural hegemonic structures, the readers and the literary market.

Learning outcome: Critical engagement with the question of the position of women in a patriarchal civilization, observing the gradual shift towards a more egalitarian society, seen through literary works.

Course 4 (Optional 3): Tagore and Germany.

Objective: Tagore and his relationship with German language, literature, philosophy, culture and personalities form the basis of this course. The course deals with Tagore's engagement with German literature, his thoughts and reflections on German culture and philosophy, his attempt at learning German and at translating a handful of German texts. The interaction with German personalities, esp.

during his three visits to Germany, represented in the conversations, correspondences and the exchange of ideas between Tagore and his German contemporaries will constitute an important aspect of this course. The reception of Tagore in Germany will also be scrutinized along with translations of Tagore's works into German.

Learning outcome: Recognizing the contribution of Tagore to cross-cultural dialogue with special reference to his unique position vis-à-vis Germany between the two World Wars.

Course 4 (Optional 4): Specialized Study of Genres (1): Drama.

Objective: Students study theory of drama and theater and representative dramatic works to be selected by the Course-in-Charge.

Learning outcome: Critical understanding of the genre, its socio-political as well aesthetic function; its evolution and variations.

MA in German: Semester II

Course I: Europe Today.

Objective: Critical acquaintance with history of contemporary Europe from end of World War II to the present day, with special focus on the emergence of a common European identity within the context of EU and contemporary socio-political issues.

Learning outcome: Understanding Europe in today's global context and Europe's relation with other geopolitical spheres in the post-colonial context.

Course 2: Literature, Society and History Ideas (2): French Revolution to 1870s.

Objective: Students re-acquaint themselves with and critically re-assess the knowledge about culture, society and seminal ideas of Europe by reading selections from canonical texts from the historical periods.

Learning outcome: Developing a critical awareness of the philosophical, cultural, political and socio-economic underpinnings of European civilization.

Course 3: Theories of Literature 2: Hermeneutics, Marxism, Sociology, Psychoanalysis.

Objective: Students are introduced to the fundamental concerns of the theoretical approaches based on the perspectives, ideologies and disciplines to be studied in this course, with special focus on relevant works by Walter Benjamin and TW Adorno.

Learning outcome: Developing a critical understanding of theoretical positions with regard to literature and other arts.

Course 4 (Optional 1): Specialized Study of Authors (II).

Objective: The Course-in-Charge will select an author / authors for detailed study. A representative selection of works will be read and discussed. Biographical research, history of reception and critical studies of the author's / authors' works will be an integral part of this course.

Learning outcome: Ability to read independently and critically the works of an author and to relate the biographical, historical, political and social background of the author comprehensively.

Course 4 (Optional 2): India in German Travelogues and Literature of the 20th Century

Objective: Students study a representative selection of travelogues and other genres in German in which India is a significant trope. With the focus on the 20th century, students inquire into the continuities and breaks in the German tradition of imagining India in literature.

Learning outcome: Students are expected to question the supposed non-colonial / post-colonial response of German writers to India.

Course 4 (Optional 3): India in German Writings of the 18th and 19th Centuries.

Objective: The "classics" of the representation of India in German literature will be dealt with here. Walter Leifer's 1969 book "Indien und die Deutschen: 500 Jahre Begegnung und Partnerschaft" will serve as a bibliographic guide. The emphasis will be on the 'orientalist' re-invention of India in German literature rather than the colonialist encounter riding piggyback on the early Portuguese colonizers. The main texts to be dealt with here are from the works of J.W. Goethe, J.G. Herder, Georg Forster, G.W.F. Hegel, H. Heine, A.W. Schlegel, F. Schlegel, W.v. Humboldt and others.

Learning outcome: Students are expected to question the myth of non-colonial / post-colonial response of German writers to India.

Course 4 (Optional 4): Specialized Study of Genres (2) Poetry.

Objective: Students study theory of poetry and representative poems to be selected by the Course-in-Charge.

Learning outcome: Critical understanding of the genre, its socio-political as well as aesthetic function; its evolution and variations.

MA in German: Semester III

Course 1: Didactics and Methodology of FLT and DaF.

Objective: The course will focus on the teaching and learning of German as a foreign language (DaF). An integral part of this course will be practical training, wherein students will be asked to conduct classes at different levels of German undergraduate courses. Their performance will be evaluated and marked; the marks will be added to their internal assessment scores.

Learning outcome: Students critically review 'traditional' methods and models of DaF and focus on subsequent developments that gathered momentum in the field in light of the changing socio-economic, political and cultural scenario in Europe and the world.

Course 2: Literature, Society and History of Ideas (3): 1870s to World War II.

Objective: Students re-acquaint themselves with and critically re-assess the knowledge about culture, society and seminal ideas of Europe by reading selections from canonical texts from the historical periods (Nietzsche, Simmel, Benjamin, Tagore etc.).

Learning outcome: Developing a critical awareness of the philosophical, cultural, political and socio-economic underpinnings of European civilization.

Course 3: Theories of Literature 3: Formalism, Structuralism and Post-Structuralism, Modernism and Post-Modernism, Multiculturalism, Post-Colonialism, New Media, Media Theory and Literature.

Objective: Students are introduced to the fundamental concerns of the theoretical approaches based on the perspectives, ideologies and disciplines to be studied in this course, with special focus on relevant works by Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, Ricoeur, McLuhan and others.

Learning outcome: Developing a critical understanding of theoretical positions with regard to literature and other arts; ability to question fundamental notions of literature (author, work, writing, reading, interpretation, medium, self, other etc.) from a theoretical perspective.

Course 4 (Optional 1): Specialized Study of Authors (III)

Objective: The Course-in-Charge will select an author / authors for detailed study. A representative selection of works will be read and discussed. Biographical research, history of reception and critical studies of the author's / authors' works will be an integral part of this course.

Learning outcome: Ability to read independently and critically the works of an author and to relate the biographical, historical, political and social background of the author comprehensively.

Course 4 (Optional 2): Bengali Translations of Works of German Literature

Objective: This course provides a critical assessment of a selection of Bengali translations of German literary works from Tagore to the present day. A review of theories of translation and the reception of German literature in the Bengali speaking culture would provide a foundation for this course.

Learning outcome: Ability for critical assessment of the translations; developing the ability to question the translators' strategies; developing the skill to produce one's own solutions to practical problems in translation.

Course 4 (Optional 3): Austrian Literature

Objective: Students will read works by authors belonging to Austria. The emphasis will be on writers from this country from the early twentieth century to this day, such as Franz Kafka, Robert Musil, Stefan Zweig, Ödön von Horváth, Hermann Broch, Elias Canetti, IlseAichinger, Ernst Jandl, Ingeborg Bachmann, Paul Celan, Peter Handke, ElfriedeJelinek, ChristophRansmayr and others. Austrian literature from earlier literary periods may also be included – for example Franz Grillparzer, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, AdalbertStifter and others.

Learning outcome: To understand critically the peculiar history and cultural heritage of Austria and its reflection in literary works.

Course 4 (Optional 4): Specialized Study of Genres (3): Prose.

Objective: Students study theory of prose and representative prose texts to be selected by the Course-in-Charge with special focus on Novelle, Erzählungen, Essays.

Learning outcome: Critical understanding of the genre, its socio-political as well aesthetic function; its evolution and variations, esp. in the age of the Internet.

MA in German: Semester IV

Course 1: Theories of Translation and Translation from and into German.

Objectives: Students are introduced to the theories of translation. The course will entail reading and critical assessment of translation from German into English and vice versa. Students will also attempt translations of selected texts from German into English and vice versa.

Learning outcome: Develop a critical insight into theoretical problems of literary translation; in the practical field ability to translate literary and non-literary texts from German into English / Bengali; translation of selected texts from Bengali / English into German.

Course 2: Literature, Society and History of Ideas (4): 1945 to the Present Day.

Objective: Students look at the developments from 1945 to the present day with emphasis on the definitive moments during this period: fascism, post-war Germany, literature, culture and the political ideology of the erstwhile German Democratic Republic, social and cultural issues related to immigrants in Germany, growth of and tensions associated with a multicultural society, reunification, mass immigration etc. An assessment of the social and cultural situation in the 'other' German speaking countries of Austria and Switzerland will form part of the discussion.

Learning outcome: Critical understanding of Germany's transition from an authoritarian centralized state to a modern democratic federal state, its crises faced during the Cold War, experience of partition and encounter with GDR, reunification in the post-perestroika phase, integration into European Union, experience of migration from 1950s to the present day, dealing with rise of right-wing neo-fascist tendencies etc.

Course 3 (Optional 1): Specialized Study of Authors (4)

Objective: The Course-in-Charge will select an author / authors for detailed study. A representative selection of works will be read and discussed. Biographical research, history of reception and critical studies of the author's / authors' works will be an integral part of this course.

Learning outcome: Ability to read independently and critically the works of an author and to relate the biographical, historical, political and social background of the author comprehensively.

Course 3 (Optional 2): Non-Ethnic German Literature.

Objective: Students will study the emergence of a new German literature produced by immigrants from Turkey, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and other parts of the world. The focus will be on studying how these writers grapple with problems arising from their unique situation as immigrants writing in a language that has willy-nilly become their own: alienation, integration, loss and reclamation of languages and home countries, ideas of selfhood and otherness, alien/familiar literary forms, alien/familiar modes of expression etc.

Learning outcome: Appreciation of the experience of migrants, their experience of alienation in unfamiliar surroundings and the expression of their experiences in an adopted language.

Course 3 (Optional 3): German Literature from Switzerland.

Objective: Students will read a selection of texts belonging to different genres written by Swiss authors in German: Gottfried Keller, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, Johanna Spyri, Hermann Hesse, Max Frisch, Walter Vogt, Robert Walser, Adolf Muschg, Peter Bichsel, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Hugo Loetscher, Urs Widmer, Alex Capus and others.

Learning outcome: Encounter with the German literature emerging from multilingual Switzerland; understanding the literary culture of the country and its unique character within the German-speaking cultural sphere.

Course 3 (Optional 4): Specialized Study of Genres (4): Other Genres and Media.

Objective: Critical study of comics, graphic novels, feature and documentary films, television serials, blogs and social media, mobile phone texting and updates and other means of communication.

Learning outcome: Acquaintance with and critical appraisal of new and unconventional genres claiming their place in the world of literature, whose contours are increasingly getting diffuse and overlapping others spheres of aesthetic expression.

Course 4: Dissertation.

Objective: Students work on a dissertation with a topic of their choice under the supervision of a faculty member of German Studies, CMELLCS. The dissertation is to be submitted for evaluation at a stipulated date. A viva voce will be organized for each submitted dissertation where the students will have to defend their work in front of a select panel of experts.

Learning outcome: Learning the rigorous planning and execution of a research project, formulating a research topic, identifying and delimiting research fields, methodologies and styles of presenting research, annotation, bibliography, citation etc.