

Teaching in the German Department at St. Olaf College

Herzlich willkommen! This document answers many practical questions you may have. It also offers some insight into the norms and philosophy of the German Department. Feel free, however, to ask additional questions or to make suggestions for additions, deletions, or other changes.

Division of labor:

Department assignments: There are a number of tasks that we divide up when we meet as a department before the semester begins. Some examples are: student work supervisor, study abroad advisor, placement director, German House advisor, social media manager, Christmas chapel service, German choir advisor, and website update supervisor, and info boards manager. We will have a long department meeting during orientation when we'll spend some time talking about all of these things. Sometimes we have our meeting even earlier, if everyone is available.

Service assignments are given in correlation with FTE, meaning if you teach 1 course there would be very little expected (like maybe helping to organize one event).

Office hours: Faculty members are expected to hold office hours. Full-time faculty members should have at least 3 hours a week, at a variety of times and days. They are expected to be available five days a week, though they may not be physically in the office every single day. (Normally, when there is not a pandemic, it is expected that all full-time faculty members are in the office at least four days a week and that office hours be held in person, though not necessarily at the office; for instance, some faculty members hold some of their office hours at the Cage.)

Note 2020 All office hours should be held virtually. Look at [Kari's profile](#) online to see how to get this listed online.

Department meeting: All members of the department are required to attend a weekly or biweekly meeting. The standard time for departmental meetings at St. Olaf is Mondays from 3:30-4:30pm. We don't normally meet past 4:30pm, only when absolutely necessary (usually at the beginning of the semester).

All members of the department are required to attend a weekly or biweekly meeting. The standard time for departmental meetings at St. Olaf is Mondays from 3:00-5:00pm. In 2020, we will have two weekly meetings. Mondays will be a combined Norwegian/German meeting from 15.30-16.30. We will determine a time for a weekly half-hour German-only meeting before the beginning of the semester. Once K-12 schools announce their plans and St. Olaf announces the revised course times, we might need to alter this schedule.

AAA = Academic Administrative Assistant. Our AAA is Jessica Thomas

<thomas23@stolaf.edu>. Jessica's work assignment is primarily to assist department chairs. However, she can assist you with photocopy/scanner problems and filing for approved department expense reimbursements.

Keys and access to Tomson Hall: You will be given at least three keys: One for your office, one for the door from the classroom hallway to the bridge, and one for our storage closet. You may also get one to Jessica's office. Your St. Olaf ID card functions as an access card to the building if you ever need to get in when it is locked. It is normally open until 11 pm, except during college breaks. You can also load Ole dollars onto your card. You can use these in the Cage, Stav Hall, Bookstore, etc. You get a discount in the Cage when using Ole Dollars.

Electronic communications: We have several e-mail aliases or mailing lists. german-dept@stolaf.edu is for the entire German teaching staff, department chair, plus the AAA;

german-classes@stolaf.edu contains all the classes for the semester;

german-majors@stolaf.edu and german-studies-conc@stolaf.edu are for students who have declared a German major or a German studies concentration.

german-house@stolaf.edu and deltaphialpha@stolaf.edu are for our two student organizations.

germanspeakers@stolaf.edu is a list of campus community members who like to receive announcements from the German department, for example students who want to continue taking part in German activities even if they are through taking German classes. Finally, there is

german-all@stolaf.edu, an umbrella list that contains all of the smaller lists above that is used to publicize to the broadest audiences.

The department maintains a website, a Facebook page and an Instagram account. Management of the website and social media may be undertaken by the same person or two different people. Often the AAA helps to make updates to the website. We do not have students post on our social media accounts. The German House maintains its own social media accounts.

Stammtisch: Normally, the German conversation table takes place in Buntrock 220 every Wednesday from 6-7pm. The Stammtisch is run by the members of German House, including an exchange student (RA) from the University of Konstanz. (COVID-19 caused all international exchanges to be cancelled this year, and Stammtisch will have to be held either online or in another venue, for instance, as a socially distanced picnic outdoors). The German House advisor is responsible for mentoring the House members on how to organize the Stammtisch--making sure all attendees are included, picking a theme or topic for the week, creating conversation starters and other speaking activities, etc. On occasion, members of Delta Phi Alpha (honor society) host a "Sonderstammtisch" on a special topic such as study abroad or student research. In that case, the DPA advisor assists the DPA hosts with their plans. (In non-

pandemic times, this often involves reserving a different, larger space to accommodate a bigger audience). “Sonderstammtisch” can also be created to host a guest speaker or alumni visitor, for instance. In those cases, the German House advisor would be responsible for assisting with those arrangements.

German faculty members are not expected to attend Stammtisch unless it is a “Sonderstammtisch” involving a special program, guest speaker, etc. But faculty members are welcome to attend. Often faculty members join the first Stammtisch at the beginning of the semester.

*2020 note: we have no idea yet if this will continue and if/ so how it will work

Other activities: We have a number of other activities throughout the year: events at the Norwegian house, events with our majors and concentrators, speakers, visitors, and community events. We try to cover all of these events as a dept., but not all members are expected to go to each one. We divide up covering these events at dept. meetings; expectations are correlated to how many sections you are teaching.

Student workers: Full-time faculty members receive student work help. Student workers may assist with homework marking and completion recording, objective test/quiz grading, class materials development, proofreading, research and non-proprietary service tasks. The student work supervisor (Amanda) oversees hiring and initial orientation, but each faculty member is in charge of mentoring their own students, explaining guidelines for marking, and keeping track of work hours and signing time cards in the Time Entry System, <https://www.stolaf.edu/apps/tes/>. Student workers are to uphold FERPA privacy guidelines. They are not to enter grades in a gradebook. They are not to mark exams except for “objective” portions (fill in the blanks, matching, etc). They may assign grades on basic homework assignments (e.g., check / check-minus / check-plus). Faculty members need to communicate with the students any preferences for grading (do you want things alphabetized, do you want things corrected or just have mistakes circled, for example). Schedule your workers at a time when you are available to meet with them or at least get them started.

We do not normally hire students during interim.

Teaching German at St. Olaf: principles for design and collaboration

The mission of the St. Olaf German Department is to offer students a critical, socially engaged, interdisciplinary and inclusive German Studies to meet global challenges.

Lower-division German courses usually have two sections. In cases where a course level is shared between two instructors, it is expected that they use a shared textbook, shared core syllabus (grading scheme, chapter selection/ordering, and testing calendar), and shared summative assessments (eg, exams, IPAs) for consistency across sections. Instructors sharing sections of a course are encouraged to use a shared **Moodle** metacourse, but are not required

to. Instructors create the syllabus and exams in collaboration, but can choose how they divide that collaborative labor (eg, one creates the base syllabus and the other sets up Moodle).

When we share teaching of multiple course sections, we work together to make sure we are sharing ideas and resources and sticking to the same testing schedule. In some years faculty have chosen to work very closely with one another; other years they have not. Instructors have done this in various ways: sometimes one person makes a GoogleDoc outlining what they are going to do for each class session that others are welcome to see/borrow ideas from; others have chosen to meet and plan activities and create materials together; still others create a shared pool of resources together via GoogleDrive.

It's not so important that we have exactly the same class activities (including short quizzes). But our norm is to work collaboratively by sharing the resources that we have with others teaching the same section, to follow the same syllabus schedule, and to use the same exams/summative assessments. All instructors are expected to contribute to (re-)writing tests and other needs as appropriate. Moreover, collaborative materials development is strongly encouraged, as it can yield innovation and boost quality through the "vier Augen Prinzip." When using materials developed by others (including colleagues at other institutions), it is important to always credit the creator (eg with a footer: "Hergestellt von Amanda Randall, St. Olaf College, German 232, Spring 2019; bearbeitet von Seth Peabody, Spring 2020").

Shared courses should use a shared **GoogleDrive** in which to place shared materials (tests, syllabus, as well as any other activities or media you do or would like to share).

Design and assessment:

While there are no mandatory components as far as College policy is concerned, there are some basic principles we follow in our German course design and assessment:

A. To the extent possible, we try to balance oral and written work in grade weighting and actual course work. When students get to the upper division (250+), they might have classes that are writing intensive (WRI) or oral competency (ORC) in their general education credit, in which case the balance is shifted somewhat so as not to overload them. But for 111-232, we strive for 50:50 written to oral.

B. For lower-division language courses, grading should be based on a fairly balanced combination of formative (eg, regular homework, short quizzes, oral interviews, essays with required revision) and summative assessment (eg, exams, IPAs). In Fall 2020, graded coursework/assessments must be balanced between the first and second halves of the semester, as faculty must submit midterm grades this year. Students are also normally graded on attendance and participation, however, questions of access and equity (including concerning technology and living circumstances when learning remotely in COVID times) should be taken into account when assessing participation. German faculty will discuss this issue at the pre-semester department meeting, in conversation with our colleagues in Norwegian.

C. From the very first day of the very first semester, we make every effort to speak only German during class to create as immersive and communicative learning environment as possible. Still, occasionally English is needed as a helping language (and for some procedural things, like going over the syllabus or introducing your teaching philosophy at the start of the course). When you choose to use English in class, be sure to communicate to students that it's a deliberate decision for a specific purpose. Students can also learn to ask permission to ask a question in English (Darf ich Englisch sprechen?), though I (Amanda) often respond with a playful "Nein, Versuch mal zuerst auf Deutsch!" (but using this approach with discretion, depending what you've observed about the student's comfort in class). Often they can do it, at least partially, in German! It is also good practice to review useful classroom management phrases at the beginning of the semester, so that routine exchanges can be in German. It is also crucially important to set the expectation right away (and reiterate it) that students should communicate only in German in the classroom.

D. Across the German curriculum, we follow Elizabeth Bernhardt's principle of (paraphrased) "content from the beginning, language to the end." That means the lower-division is content-driven, whereby relevant language work is logically integrated in a topic-text-task course structure; grammar should not determine or eclipse the cultural content. To build a linguistic foundation for increasingly demanding analytical work, the balance of language:content emphasis shifts as students progress through the curriculum. In the 111/112 level, assessments should weigh language accuracy somewhat more than content production (ca. 60:40 language:content). In 231/232 we move to 50:50 language:content; in 250s 60:40 language:content; in the 270s and 370s 70:30 language:content. These are not precise numbers. The main point is, at the first-year level, we want to emphasize learning the language structure a bit more over the content work in instruction and assessment in order to lay a strong foundation for the increasing demands of engaging content critically in the target language.

Intended learning outcomes

Each course in the German curriculum has a set of intended learning outcomes and course objectives along which the course is designed and that are stated in the syllabus to set students' expectations. The importance of having clearly stated objectives to guide teaching and design was reiterated during a three-year curriculum overhaul starting in 2017 according to the principle of backwards design (designing a clear and logical articulation of skills and knowledge development as students move through the curriculum to the intended end point). There are ILOs for the [German major, the German concentration](#), and the [Foreign Language General Education Requirement \(FOL\)](#).

The ILOs for the German major:

Students will demonstrate:

1. linguistic competence, including language proficiency in listening, reading, writing and speaking at the ACTFL Intermediate-High level; and metalinguistic awareness of language as a system and of the ways in which language organizes thought processes and reflects culture.
2. cultural knowledge, including the ability to interpret trends in contemporary German

society informed by an understanding of German history.

3. textual competence, including the ability to comprehend and analyze a wide range of texts, taking account of factors such as text type, audience, purpose, organization, discourse conventions, rhetorical elements, and linguistic features, as well as historical, geographical, cultural, and intellectual context.

The ILOs for the German Studies concentration:

Students will demonstrate:

1. Linguistic Competence, including: a) Intermediate-level language proficiency in listening, reading, writing, and speaking German; and b) Metalinguistic awareness of language as a system and of the ways in which language organizes thought processes and reflects culture.
2. Broad understanding of the cultures of German-speaking countries, including a) The ability to interpret political, religious, or cultural trends in one or more German-speaking countries, informed by a knowledge of history; and b) Advanced knowledge of aspects of the culture or language of one or more German-speaking countries.

Observations (chair, director, peer)

Your departmental chair will observe you at least once each academic year. Depending on the requirements for your position (if you are going up for promotion, for example), you might be observed multiple times or in multiple courses. Chair observation is part of the faculty review process. Faculty members who are new to the college, whose teaching the chair is unfamiliar with, can expect at least one observation per semester.

Additionally, if the chair is not from the German department and there is a Director of German, they will also observe your teaching, as they can give you more feedback in terms of language use.

German faculty members should observe each other at least once each academic year and meet subsequently to discuss your observations--what you learned from watching and what suggestions you might offer. We also encourage all faculty to do peer observations of instructors in other language departments. Peer observation is intended for faculty members to learn from each other to improve the overall quality and coherence of the German curriculum.

Evaluations

All faculty members must have their students fill out end-of-semester evaluation forms. The responses are shared with the department chair for the purpose of faculty review and discussion about design and pedagogy areas of success and needs for change and/or improvement. There is no standard form, but rather a set of standard question types (useful for comparison). Faculty are then encouraged to add specific questions aimed at assessing particular elements of the course pertaining to, for example, text selection, student engagement and learning, and course structure and coherence. The department chair collects syllabi for every class taught in the department as part of the assessment process and for the department record.

As always, the curriculum is a work in progress! All faculty members are encouraged to contribute ideas, resources and materials to help to advance the program along these shared basic design principles and intended learning outcomes. Contributions that individuals make--alone or in partnership--will always be acknowledged by name in official reviews and recommendations for opportunities on and off-campus. You also have the opportunity to detail your contributions to the German curriculum in the official annual review that each faculty member submits to the College every June. Instructors are also encouraged to publish about their curricular innovations, both individual and co-authored, in, for example, *Die Unterrichtspraxis*, in order to be recognized for their work and disseminate it within the larger German teaching community.

Budget matters:

Printing. It costs significantly more to make copies on the convenience copier near our department. So please make every effort to plan ahead and send copying to the print center. To place an order, submit a printing workorder electronically at <https://wp.stolaf.edu/printcenter/>. PDF documents work best, though they can accept other formats as well. The turn-around time is very fast, usually by the next morning if something is submitted by mid afternoon, or even the same day, if submitted in the morning. One of the AAA's student workers (not the German Department student workers) usually does a print order pick-up run to the Print Center in Buntrock Commons a couple times a day. Otherwise you can always walk over and pick up your order personally.

Purchasing supplies. The department pays for basic supplies that are used to support your work at the college, including pens, paper clips, stapler, staples, etc. etc. This does not include print cartridges for your home printer. Anything larger should be cleared with the chair before you order/purchase it. It is possible to purchase supplies through the St. Olaf bookstore. It is, however, more economical to have our AAA order them for us. We normally collect a list of items needed and submit a larger order periodically.

Long term staff receive a departmental Ole Card (different from your ID card) that you will use to purchase things in the bookstore or at the Cage when you are with guests. This card will also be used to pay for your dinner when you attend Stammtisch.

Some long term staff are also issued a college VISA card that can be used to pay for travel and other expenses covered by your IPAT account. If you feel a need to have this, please discuss it with the chair. If you don't have a St. Olaf credit card but you prefer to (or can't) put a charge on your personal credit card to receive reimbursement, you can have the AAA use theirs.

IPAT. Each tenured or tenure-track faculty member receives \$1500 a year for professionally-related expenses, including travel to conferences, books, memberships in professional organizations, etc. This is in addition to any start-up funds you may have received. If you have extraordinary expenses--giving a paper at an international conference, for example, it is also

possible to request additional support from the Associate Dean. German is in the Humanities Faculty (Colin Wells, Associate Dean). Faculty members who do not have an IPAT may apply directly to the Associate Dean for support to attend a conference.

Other practical matters:

Class absences: If you intend to be absent from campus in order to attend an out-of-town conference, you should notify the chair of your upcoming absence, indicate where you are going and how long you will be gone, and report what you are planning to do about your classes during your absence. If you are ill, you should also notify the chair, preferably by telephone. It is not sufficient simply to send an e-mail to your students indicating that class is cancelled.

Required events: Note that all full-time faculty are required to attend a number of college-wide events during the year. These include orientation for faculty and orientation for students. Faculty orientation includes 1-2 department meeting days. Note that there are very few days free from when you arrive on campus for orientation until when classes start, including Labor Day weekend (for example, first-year students arrive on Saturday, when they meet with their advisors; all day Monday we orient them) and Memorial Day weekend (Sunday we meet with the students and parents and then take part in graduation ceremonies). Given the COVID-19 pandemic, event plans may shift either in a planned way determined at the beginning of the academic year, or on short notice, and most events will be held remotely. Please watch your St. Olaf email for announcements pertaining to official College events.

Pay begins August 15 and from this time on you can expect a full schedule of orientations and meetings. *Note for 2020 you will have orientations and some department meetings from August 10 due to the pandemic.

Additional required events include faculty meetings (usually first Thursday of the month during Community time, from 11:30-12:30), Opening Convocation, Honors Day, Graduation (Memorial day Sunday).

Academic Regalia: Normally, there are about 4-5 events where academic regalia is needed per academic year. The bookstore sends an email about renting one if you don't have one (about \$40 a time). There are two extra robes (simple black ones) that anyone is welcome to use in German Chair Kari Lie Dorer's office. Please don't spend money to rent this if you need one!