



Department of
German, Nordic, and Slavic
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Mitteilungen aus Madison

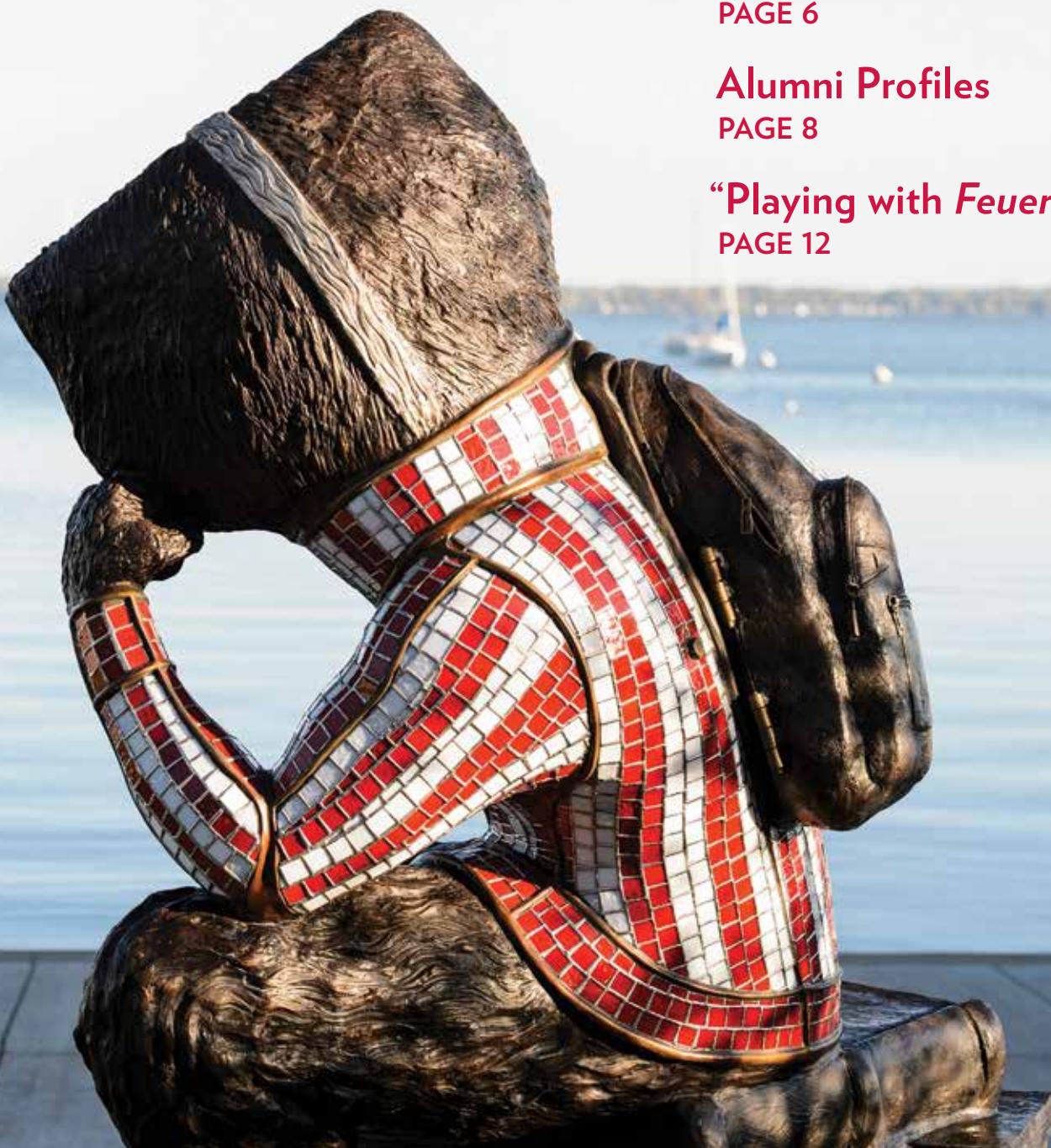
2017-18

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Warm Greetings from Madison!

Dear friends of the German Program,

Best greetings from Madison and Van Hise Hall! Since the last *Mitteilungen* came out in 2016, we've moved further on in our transition, merging with Scandinavian and Slavic Studies to form the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic. We look forward to collaborations with our colleagues in the other units, designing and introducing new courses across the programs. What has not changed is our commitment to excellence in teaching and research. Van Hise Hall continues to be a lively hub of activities, of teaching and learning, of lectures, film screenings, workshops, and *Kaffeestunde*.

Our alumni continue to lead and shape the field of German Studies, as was evident—to name just one example—at the recent conferences



We love to hear from you, and we appreciate your contributions.

of the German Studies Association, where it was great to see so many of you!

UW-Madison was recently named as one of the leading universities in study abroad programs, and we participate in this success through our Bonn program and the year-long faculty-led program Academic Year in Freiburg. I had the honor and pleasure

to serve as resident director in 2015-16 and I am excited about the foundation of the new US branch of the AYF Alumni organization.

We are grateful for your support of our mission and for supporting our students. We love to hear from you, and we appreciate your contributions. Please keep in touch!

Herzliche Grüße aus Madison!
Sabine Mödersheim
Head of the German Program

MITTEILUNGEN AUS MADISON

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Together, We Thrive



Join the German Club for Stammtisch

UW German Club is for anyone interested in learning more about the German language and culture! This student organization hosts a bi-weekly German conversation table (called “Stammtisch”), as well as events throughout the semester.

Stammtisch is a German conversation table held every other Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Memorial Union Rathskeller. It’s a great way to meet other German speakers and practice your German in a fun, casual setting outside of the classroom. Stop by when you have time—we would love to see you there! Just look for the table with the German flag. ALL levels of German are welcome!

Stockwerk Deutsch

Dr. Julie Larson-Guenette (at left in photo) is excited to be in her new role as the faculty assistant for Stockwerk Deutsch this year. In addition to the one-credit film seminar titled *Die Filme Fatih Akins*, the “Stockis” will enjoy communal dinners with guests from the German program, cooking nights, arts and crafts events, and German-themed events in the greater Madison area along with programming within the International Learning Community (ILC). Everyone is looking forward to a fun and educational year during which long-lasting friendships are formed.



From London to Madison: New Faculty Profile

Katerina Somers received her PhD in German Linguistics from UW-Madison in 2007. After eleven years in exile, first at the University of Georgia (Athens, GA), then at Queen Mary University of London (London, UK), she is happy to return to Madison as an Assistant Professor in the newly formed Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic. Katerina’s primary research and teaching focus is in the field of historical linguistics with an emphasis on early medieval Germanic. She is currently working on a book that explores the concrete ways in which the circumstances of an early medieval text’s production—whether that work is native poetry or a translation of a Latin source

text, whether its purpose was to convince, convert, or convey literal truths—directly affects its linguistic structures. She is also excited to teach a new course in Spring 2019, “Barbarian Language and Culture in the Germanic World.” Students will explore Western Europe’s transition from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages, a time of radical change for the Germanic barbarians when they became the political and cultural inheritors of the Western Roman Empire. When not thinking about the lives and languages of ninth-century Germans, Katerina enjoys lifting heavy things, as a dedicated powerlifter, and taking her dog Dinah on long walks.

German and the Wisconsin Idea

GERMAN DAY

Jeanne Schueller

On April 26, 2018, the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic hosted its 29th German Day in Union South on the UW-Madison campus. Since the first German Day was held in 1990, students from high schools and middle schools around Wisconsin have been showcasing their knowledge of German through poetry readings, spelling competitions, skit presentations, Pictionary, charades, solo and ensemble music performances, a poster, and—new in 2018—a meme competition! For this year's theme, *Wie Deutsch mein Leben verbessert hat*, 533 students representing 37 German programs at middle schools and high schools reflected on the ways that learning German positively influences their lives. Thousands of Wisconsin students have participated in German Day over the past 29 years, and many of them have gone on to become undergraduates at UW-Madison, continue their study of German, and even volunteer at German Day! We look forward to welcoming students and teachers to Madison for the 30th annual German Day on March 14, 2019.



Germany
and the U.S.



“WUNDERBAR TOGETHER” PODCAST PROJECT

German major students Laura Downer and Michael Makowski are thrilled to work on a podcast project named “*Fernweb and Home: Stories of German-American Heritage in Southern Wisconsin*.” Its purpose is advocating the importance of the German-American relationship at a local level. The podcast is funded and promoted by the German State Department as part of the “*Deutschlandjahr*,” with additional support from the Carl-Schurz-Haus in Freiburg, Germany. The project is part of the initiative “Wunderbar Together”: from October 2018 until the end of 2019, Germany and its deep ties to the US will be on display all across the United States.



Meet Our Students

The Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic strives to create inclusive excellence by valuing the contributions of people of diverse backgrounds based on their race, ethnicity, culture, veteran status, marital status, socio-economic level, national origin, religious belief, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and class.



Josh Riebe, student currently taking German 285:

"I began learning German when I attended the Milwaukee German Immersion School, starting at age five. I have been taking German classes since then and have been to Germany twice. I hope to work for the government doing Geographic Information Systems but relish the idea of utilizing my German also."



"I am **Yuren Sun** and am taking German 101 this semester. I think German is a precise and straightforward language, and I am quite interested in the logic of it. Musicals are what truly raised my thought to study German. Also, studying a third language itself is a really cool thing and is what I want to do. I want to major in Computer Science and Economics, and Germany has great impact on technology. Maybe I will study in Germany since I am interested in the technology and culture there."



"My name is **Shane Deng**, and I am currently taking German 203. If you wonder why I am interested in German, it can be traced back to the summer that I stayed in Thailand. I did international volunteering with two German friends and they told me a lot of things about Germany, which really sparked my 'German' dream. Also, as an engineering student, German will be a very practical language in the industry. I really want to go to Germany! Maybe my German proficiency is not good enough for me to have a full conversation with German speakers but I just really want to immerse myself in the German environment!"

18%

OF THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 100-LEVEL GERMAN CLASSES ARE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

10%

OF THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN 200-LEVEL GERMAN CLASSES ARE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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Your gift makes it possible for us to do more.

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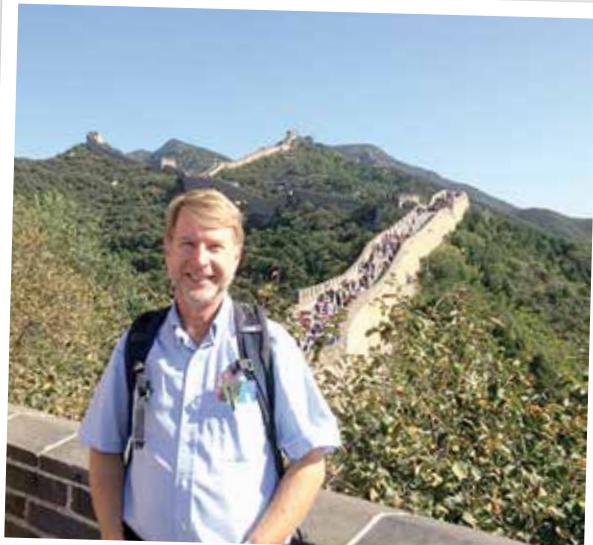
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German Going Global

Study Abroad

A group of UW-Madison students are studying abroad in Germany in the 2018–19 Academic Year Freiburg (AYF) program. AYF students have already been to Switzerland and France, hiked the Black Forest, visited a 400-year-old farm house, tried authentic Black Forest Cake, went sailing on the Schluchsee, and enjoyed glorious sunsets over the Freiburg Münster.



Mark Louden Presented in China

Professor Mark Louden traveled to China to present at the 2017 Beijing Humboldt Forum, an annual conference that brings together mostly Chinese, German, and Austrian scholars to explore topics related to the green economy, technology, and culture. Mark spoke on Pennsylvania Dutch, apparently the first time this language has been explored at a scholarly forum in China.



Monika Chavez Visited Kazakhstan

Professor Monika Chavez visited Nazarbayev University (NU) in Astana, Kazakhstan, in September 2017. She was asked to consult—together with Slavic graduate student Olga Permitina—on the blueprint, item analysis, and curricular implications of NU's emerging Kazakh language placement test.

Academic Excellence

Venkat Mani: Winner of the GSA 2018 Best Book Prize, and Co-winner of the MLA 2018 Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures

Professor Venkat Mani's *Recoding World Literature: Libraries, Print Culture, and Germany's Pact with Books* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017) is a fantastic exploration of his term "bibliomigrancy." His treatment of the physical and virtual circulation and consumption of world literature masterfully uses a variety of approaches and examples from world literatures—while remaining anchored in the German tradition—to institutional history, history of publishing, and *Weltliteratur*. Mani's book is truly outstanding: vast in scope and insight, it covers broad intellectual ground. It's the kind

of book that will re-frame a lot of conversations. Venkat Mani leads the pack owing to his integration of German literature and culture within the world paradigm and his treatment of the mobility of texts across media and geography. It is a smart and forward-looking book. He engages new media and electronic texts within the print context and makes it relevant for us all. It is an ideal GSA prize-winning book because it is ambitious, very well written, and nuanced in its research. (From the GSA laudatio)



2018 Undergraduate Awards Banquet

On April 18, 2018, the German program recognized several undergraduate students at our annual awards banquet, which was held at the University Club. More than 100 students, family members, and friends joined the German faculty at the celebration, a special highlight of which was an address by distinguished alumna Dr. Mary A. Seeger (read more about Mary on page 9).

The following students were recognized for their achievements in German coursework at the intermediate level: Taylor Badger, Emilie Burditt, Jamie Dalheim, Emma Hazel, Nina Hengelfelt, Emily Janicik, Peter Janssen, MacKenzie Keen, Olivia Keidl, Tristan Krause, Amanda Novak, Emily Perez, Alanah Rapp, Blythe Ratzmann, John Rottier, Libby Sattler, Samantha Schneiker, and Brandon Toye. For outstanding work in courses at the advanced level, these students were

honored: Gabriel Alves, Matthew Buchholz, Shanthi Cambala, Steven Hoff, Sean Huth, Kadina Johnston, Thomas Marszewski, Brennan McGinn, Emily Menting, Emily Proehl, Kestrel Schmidt, Charles Schneider, and Christine White.

Alexa Grunwaldt, a graduating senior who majored in German and Economics, received the **Klaus L. Berghahn Award** for an outstanding paper in German literature or culture. Three students majoring in German were honored with awards that recognize outstanding work across multiple courses. The awards are funded through the generosity of Ms. Lisbeth Pisk in honor of her family. Leighty Hanrahan received the **Lisbeth Pisk Award**, which is given to a deserving sophomore; the **Pisk and Ronda Broatch Family Award** went to Eva Sophie Anderson, a junior; and the **Dr. Karl Oskar and Theodora Pisk Award**



was presented to Ellen Opitz, who graduated last spring with a double degree in German and Geography.

Wrapping up the evening, we were pleased to induct the following students into our chapter of Delta Phi Alpha, the National German Honor Society: Jake Bradford, Heather Ehnert, Alexa Grunwaldt, Steven Hoff, Jessica Howard, Jill Iwanski, Alix Klinzing, Emily Menting, Jerome McKibben III, Ellen Opitz, Brendan Schlaman, Kestrel Schmidt, Abby Schweiner, and Kaitlin Stoner.

German Alumni Profiles

Benjamin Frey: Recipient of 2017 Martin Luther King Unsung Hero Award

Q&A with Professor Benjamin Frey



Ben received his PhD in German with Minor in Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2013.

Question: Tell us about yourself.

Ben: My name is Ben Frey and I received my PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2013. I'm currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. My work deals primarily with questions of language shift and revitalization, especially in indigenous communities in the United States. My passion for language revitalization arises from my own citizenship in the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, headed in the ancestral Cherokee homeland of western North Carolina. Although Cherokees are incredibly widely-known among American Indian peoples, our language is severely endangered. Currently we have only around 250–300 first-language speakers of Cherokee in North Carolina out of a population of approximately 16,000 Eastern Cherokee citizens. Even so, as indigenous people, we have always found ways to survive. That desire for the survival of our culture and our soul as a people fuels my work.

Question: Do you use German in your career or day-to-day life?

Ben: I don't speak a lot of German anymore, but I do find endless opportunities to reference linguistic examples of German while discussing Cherokee. It's incredibly helpful to be able to provide some context for learners of Cherokee by illustrating that the language isn't doing anything that's inherently "strange"—at least any more so than German.

Question: What other less-specific skills that you developed in the German major do you use?

Ben: Teaching! I am so incredibly thankful for my experiences teaching both German and Dutch, and the valuable knowledge I gained in the area of second language acquisition and pedagogy. Those skills have been fundamental in establishing a curriculum for teaching Cherokee via the communicative approach—an approach that has thus far been seriously under-employed in indigenous language contexts.

Question: Do you have any favorite memories of your time in the

German Department? From your time at UW-Madison in general?

Ben: I have so many. I will never forget our fall trips to the corn maze and the taste of pumpkin donuts and apple cider; bratwursts and Spotted Cow on the Terrace; and late night mac-and-cheese pizza from Ian's. I fondly remember speaking German on Thursday nights at Stammtisch, usually huddled over a very *gemütlich/gesellig* long wooden table in the Paul Bunyan Room. They would kick us out of the Union at midnight and we'd keep the party rolling until bar time at 2 a.m.—and we'd be speaking German the whole time. I'd dream in it and wake up still thinking in it. I forged friendships in German with other Americans, and realized at one point that I had never spoken English with them before, and that it felt odd to do so. That really taught me something about relationships and linguistic habits—a lesson that has been vital in informing my thinking about language revitalization.



Ben was the recipient of the 2017 MLK Unsung Hero Award for his steadfast commitment to inclusion and his significant contributions to social justice, equity, and diversity.

Mary Seeger: A Special Visitor at a Special Event

By Sabine Gross

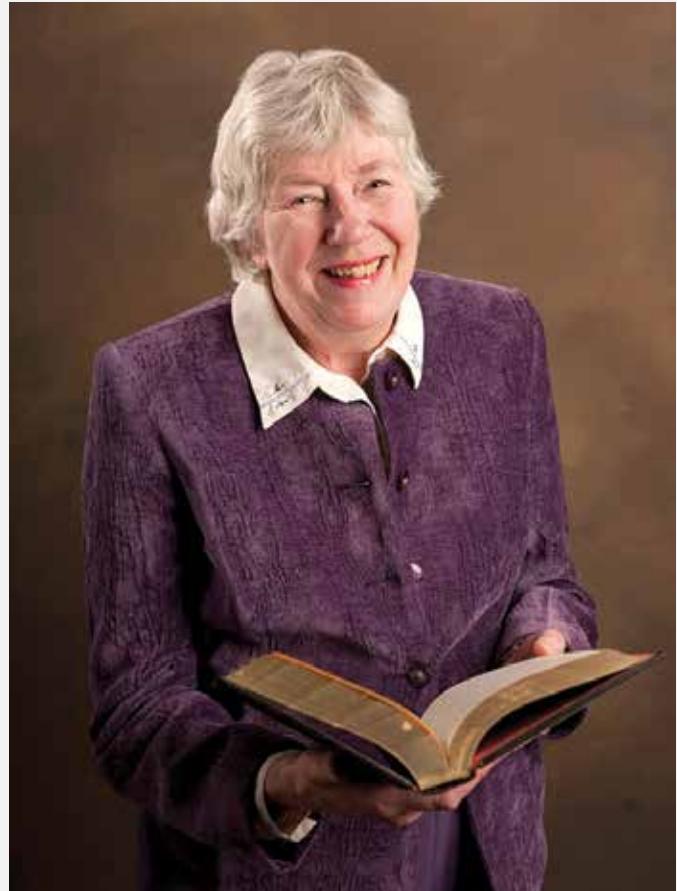


Professor Emerita Mary Seeger at the annual German Undergraduate Awards Banquet, April 2018

When I met Mary Seeger face-to-face for the first time in April 2018, it felt more like meeting a cherished friend: after all, we'd been corresponding for a number of years. Mary is a distinguished alumna of our Department of German, having received her PhD here in 1970 for her dissertation "English Influences on the Language of the Dodge County Pioneer, Mayville, Wisconsin." We share a number of interests, including a passion for the detective genre, so over the years, we've exchanged texts and tips of favorite books, and Mary introduced me to *Mystery Readers' Journal*.

Mary is Professor Emerita of German and Linguistics, having taught for forty years at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, where she held an impressive number of leadership positions and was a strong advocate for gender equity and first-generation college students. Her post-retirement schedule is almost as busy, so we were thrilled when her schedule finally offered an opening for a return visit to Madison in 2018. She gave a lively and entertaining lecture on Scandinavian mysteries that provided insights into the most successful popular genre of fiction and had the students of my "*Mord und Totschlag*" spellbound by the breadth of her knowledge and references to Scandinavian and German texts and cultures.

Mary also joined us for a special event, as keynote speaker for our annual Undergraduate Awards Banquet. For students, their parents, and colleagues, Mary's presence made the banquet all the more memorable. In her studies and her career, Mary gathered decades of experience not only in German, but much more broadly; for today's students and graduates, it was il-



luminating to hear about her experiences during times when working toward an advanced degree as a woman, not to mention aspiring to a full career and continuing to succeed in major positions and responsibilities, was much less accepted than today. Mary's colleagues at Grand Valley State continue to speak with enthusiasm and gratitude about her pioneering efforts in paving the way for women professionally, leveling the playing field, and creating space for women in leadership, while also serving as an amazing mentor.

Mary is the kind of person who works tirelessly to make academic and other communities better. She and her husband Bill—also a PhD alum of our Department of German—have been generous supporters of our students and activities in German for many years. In Mary's academic and public career, in her civic-mindedness and engagement, in her success in all of these areas, she is an alumna who makes those of us who came here over the past several decades proud to be a faculty member in this department.

German and 2018

1918–2018

The Legacy of Migration and Displacement, Europe 1918–2018

The Center for German and European Studies (CGES) and the Center for European Studies at UW–Madison hosted a conference entitled, “War’s End? The Legacy of Migration and Displacement, Europe 1918–2018” on November 8–10, 2018. This conference celebrated the 20th anniversary of CGES and also marked the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. Funding for this event was provided primarily by the US Department of Education Title VI grant awarded to the Center for European Studies. Over the course of three days, scholars from around the world spoke on topics ranging from “Canadian Nationalism and Songwriting in the First World War” to “Wars and Displacement in the Former Yugoslavia, Syria, and Iraq.” Also featured was a keynote address by associate editor of the *Financial Times*, Wolfgang Münchau, and a special conversation with His Excellency David O’Sullivan, Ambassador of

the EU to the US. A poster session held by graduate students from a range of departments was held on November 9. In this session, faculty, students, and community members alike were able to discuss various topics of research conducted by UW–Madison graduate students. Some of the topics that were presented on included Italian responses to the European migrant crisis, Vietnamese migration to the Czech Republic in the second half of the 20th century, and the rise of far-right political parties in Europe during recent years. This conference would not have been possible without the support of faculty, students, and staff from various departments around the UW–Madison campus. It is also



Graduate student Sophia Strietholt presents at the poster session.

Photo by Elena Shirkova

important to acknowledge the presenters who shared their work, and thank them for traveling to Madison for this event. Finally, it should be noted that this event was made possible in part by the continued support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Centers of Excellence Program that helps fund the Center for German and European Studies at UW–Madison.

1968–2018

Tracing the Impacts and Representations of 1968

On October 13, 2018, UW–Madison hosted a conference titled “Tracing the Impacts and Representations of 1968.” This is the year of global commemorations of the 50th anniversary of 1968. For many it marks an occasion to look back at the events and participants associated with what is widely viewed as a political and social rupture after the devastation of World War II. During the event, presentations were given by a number of renowned scholars from across the United States and Europe.

Students, staff, and the general public were all welcome to attend this conference to learn more about this exciting time period and the lasting impacts that the events of this era have had on the world. The conference was supported by a number of departments on campus and could not have been accomplished without the support of the UW–Madison community. We look forward to continuing to host exciting events such as this one in the future.



Peggy Lescrenier and Marc Silberman

Back to the Future

Back to the Future: The 50th Wisconsin Workshop (September 14–16, 2017)

Almost five decades of the German Department's "Wisconsin Workshops" was an occasion to celebrate not only a long history of cutting-edge German studies research, but also to recognize two emeritus faculty, Jost Hermand and Klaus Berghahn, who were instrumental in establishing and maintaining this record of continuity. "Back to the Future" was the motto for the eight invited presenters to reflect on how tradition inspires innovation in the field of German studies. It enticed many graduate alumni to return to Madison for the conference, for the opening "Mostalgie" (Madison Nostalgia!) celebration, and the concluding banquet. The conference proceedings are available as a book edited by emeritus colleague Marc Silberman (*Back to the Future: Tradition and Innovation in German Studies*, Peter Lang, 2018; see <https://www.peterlang.com/view/title/67873?format=PBK>), and a commemorative photobook documenting past Workshops, as well as the 2017 events, is available as a gift to all department alumni who donate \$300 or more to the German Department Enhancement Fund (<https://secure.supportuw.org/give/>).



Christoph Wickham addresses the audience at the alumni event "Mostalgie" (Madison Nostalgia), the kick-off of the 50th Wisconsin Workshop.



"Playing with Feuer?"

Reflections on Taking German 644 Theory and Practice of German Drama

By Leighty Hanrahan



Pictured cast members: Eva Anderson, Dana Coggio, Drew Eklund, Leah Ewing, Leighty Hanrahan, Landyn Heimerl, Sophia Heimerl, and Austin Mielke.

German 644 and its rendition of *Biedermann und die Brandstifter* was unlike anything that I have ever experienced (or probably will ever undertake) during my time at UW-Madison. The first portion of the course, from January to mid-March, was devoted to unearthing dramatic theory and interpreting German plays with our phenomenal professor, Sabine Gross. The class itself had a wide array of ages, theater experience, and German-speaking abilities, but Professor Gross always insured that each student felt comfortable sharing his/her own interpretations and opinions of the pieces that we read.

Professor Gross and our guest-director, Andreas Neckritz from

Berlin, had already been working behind the scenes throughout the semester, brainstorming, shortening performance time, and eventually assigning roles. However, all the inner workings of the show were by no means strictly in the hands of Professor Gross and Andreas. For our final essay for the course, we were told to utilize all that we had learned about dramatic theory in the first half of the semester to generate propositions for the performance.

Upon Andreas' arrival, we immediately began preparations, with only five weeks to do so. The vigorous practices were conducted completely in German (averaging fifteen hours weekly), which

put both my language skills and time management skills to the test. I was cast as a member of the chorus ("Chor"), along with five of my other classmates, a mystifying role in which we all spoke in unison in very poetic and formal German.

Andreas gave us more than enough wiggle room for creativity and personal character development of each role. This was an aspect of theater that proved to be very difficult for me at the beginning because it was well outside of my comfort zone. However, my character gradually grew more whimsical throughout the rehearsal process as I grew more confident. For example,



we decided that my character would apply excessive amounts of lipstick to both myself and other cast members throughout each performance. A handful of chorus members and I even included portions in English for the audience members who spoke little to no German. Within the first few weeks of rehearsal, any sort of competition that one often observes at an institution like UW-Madison immediately dissipated, evolving into a joint effort to put on the best performance possible.

After a strenuous five weeks, we presented three successful performances at Play Circle Theater in the Memorial Union. I, as well as my classmates, felt an overwhelm-

ing surge of accomplishment and were astonished by the lack of stage fright (auf Deutsch: "Lampenfieber") experienced due to our thorough preparation and group chemistry. My fellow 644 classmates and I have remained very close since the end of the spring semester. Such a unique opportunity produced truly lifelong friendships, and I will never forget my experience.

Leighty Hanrahan is a junior at UW-Madison studying German, Political Science, and International Studies. She enjoys reading, playing ukulele, and foreign languages. Leighty took the advanced theater course as a freshman.

After many years in which Manfred Roth from Frankfurt guest-directed the biennial German Play, in Spring 2017, Andreas Neckritz, *Diplomschauspieler* and theater director from Berlin, took on this responsibility and spent six weeks at UW-Madison, where he staged Swiss author Max Frisch's play *Biedermann und die Brandstifter* (*Biedermann and the Arsonists*) with German students. Note: This play had previously been performed by Madison German students in 1964 under the direction of Valters Nollendorfs!

2018 Message from the Dean



Every year, I wait eagerly for the results of the Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Awards. The honor has been given out since 1953 to recognize the university's finest educators. The vast majority—at least nine out of twelve every year—go to L&S faculty.

I'm always humbled and a bit surprised. After all, we have only 39% of the faculty at UW-Madison. But in Letters & Science we care about great teaching because

we teach 64% of undergraduate credit hours (and 57% of all the credit hours taught on the UW-Madison campus). Moreover, knowledge creation and outstanding teaching often go hand in hand.

It is a myth that great research comes at the expense of great experiences in the classroom. Many of our internationally known scholars can be found working with undergraduates in labs and in archives, organizing first-year interest groups, and developing innovative teaching methods. We call these “high-impact practices,” and they happen across the college, in large lecture classes (where one professor implemented small but import-

ant changes in the way he called on students, ensuring that all had a voice), and smaller courses (like the Shakespeare course that visited the Chazen Museum to view relics from the bard’s era).

Our faculty bring talent, passion, imagination, humor, and empathy into their classrooms every day. If you could see, as I do, the notes from our graduating L&S seniors recalling their favorite professors, you would understand that not only do our faculty create knowledge, but they also change lives. I couldn’t be more proud of what they do.

Your support of our teaching and learning efforts is greatly appreciated. Visit ls.wisc.edu/about/our-faculty to find out more about teaching and learning in L&S.

On, Wisconsin!
Dean Karl Scholz



Dear Alumni, Friends, and Supporters of the German Program,

In times when we face continued defunding of public higher education, increasing corporatization of higher education, and attacks on the Humanities, it is of vital importance for the German Program to garner the broadest and strongest support from its alumni, friends, and supporters.

We depend on your support and your donation that will allow us to:

- Provide study abroad stipends to students
- Offer fellowships to high-achieving undergraduate students
- Leverage high-impact teaching practices to enhance student learning
- Sustain the long, nationally recognized rigor and vitality of UW-Madison's German Program

You can contribute to an existing fund or provide a major gift that endows a new, named fund that you define yourself.

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Over 50 Years!

The Academic Year in Freiburg has offered a high-quality study abroad program to university students for over 50 years.



Junior Year in Freiburg (JYF) class of 1966-67, photo by John Tenhunen