



Department of
German, Nordic, and Slavic+
COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Mitteilungen aus Madison

2020

NEWS FROM GERMAN AT UW-MADISON



Jost Hermand at 90: A Living Legend
page 4

Losing a Famed and Fabled Colleague
page 6

A Student Perspective on the Pandemic
page 12

Diversity in German
page 18

Greetings, Friends of the UW–Madison German Program!



I am pleased to be writing to you as the new head of the German program within the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic+. We've recently added the "+" to our departmental name to reflect the diversity of our curricular offerings, which goes beyond courses in "G," "N," and "S" to include Kazakh, Turkish, and now also the UW Folklore Program. Within our own unit, we've begun to informally refer to ourselves as "German+" since in addition to German we teach and do research on Dutch, Pennsylvania Dutch, and Yiddish, as well as older Germanic languages like Gothic and Old Saxon.

Although the number of students pursuing majors or minors/certificates in languages other than English has declined nationally over the past several years, our undergraduate enrollments in German here at UW–Madison continue to be strong, which is due in large measure to the continued health of German programs in Wisconsin high schools. Our graduate program remains healthy as well. We currently have 17 colleagues teaching in our unit, which includes our newest hire, Dr. Melissa Sheedy, a 2018 graduate of our Ph.D. program who

taught for two years at UC Santa Barbara. We are thrilled to welcome Melissa back to Madison! (See her profile in this newsletter.)

On a bittersweet note, our colleague Weijia Li has accepted an appointment from the School of Education as a Clinical Professor and Director of the Global Higher Education Program. Weijia came to UW–Madison in 2013 with an appointment split between German and the School of Education. While we will miss working with Weijia in the German program day-to-day, we are happy to know he will be just a short walk from Van Hise Hall down Bascom Hill. We congratulate Weijia on his new position and are grateful for all that he has contributed to our program.

It is a cliché that the past year has been like no other in academe, not just in North America, but globally. Our university, like all others, pivoted to all-remote instruction in mid-March, and this fall most (though not all) of our courses are being taught online or in hybrid format. Like our colleagues elsewhere, we have had to adapt our courses to these changed circumstances, which includes discovering new tools that we will be able to use in some way after the pandemic recedes and we can return to mostly or all in-person instruction. Another silver lining is being able to sponsor events such as online panel discussions, symposia, and workshops that draw audiences that are larger and more diverse, at least in terms of geography, than those at traditional in-person events.

In addition to expanding our pedagogical toolkits, we as a unit and a department have committed ourselves to addressing the systemic racism and injustice in our society in ways that include but go beyond producing public statements of concern. We are actively discussing concrete steps that we can take to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom and in the professional fields in which we work. It is heartening to know that our yearning for justice in the German+ unit is shared by our colleagues across campus, from the Chancellor on down.

It has now been five years since the former departments of German, Scandinavian Studies, and Slavic Languages and Literature merged to form a new administrative unit. The merger has been a very successful one that has not only preserved the integrity of our respective undergraduate and graduate programs but in fact enhanced them by facilitating the exchange of ideas with colleagues working in different areas. Prior to the merger, all of us in the Department of German were engaged in research and teaching spanning multiple fields, which was reflected in our affiliations with interdisciplinary programs, centers, and institutes across campus. By bringing some of this disciplinary diversity together under one departmental roof we have been able to expand our professional horizons to the benefit of our undergraduate and graduate students who likewise see their study of German as part of a diverse intellectual tapestry.

On behalf of my colleagues in the German program, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your support of our work. And I invite you to visit the News and Events pages on our [departmental website](#) to learn more about the activities we sponsor, and to contact me for access information. You are welcome to attend our virtual events without having to travel to Madison!

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark A. Loudén".

Mark Loudén
Head, German section

Dean's Message

September 2020

In June, I was honored to assume the role of Dean of the College of Letters & Science, during one of the most challenging times in my 25 years at UW-Madison. As we wrestle with a global pandemic, social unrest and economic turmoil all at once, I am reminded of what makes a Letters & Science education so timelessly important. The values we teach—compassion, intellectual curiosity, tolerance and resilience—prepare our students not only to flourish in good times, but to learn, grow and change during periods of challenge and hardship.

Hard times—particularly times of protest—often bring about change. That's overdue here at UW-Madison, where many of our students of color have, for far too long, experienced a UW that feels less welcoming to them. We pride ourselves on the world-class experience offered to our students, preparing them for positions of leadership and illuminating their path forward. A key leadership priority for me is creating an inclusive environment where all students can feel at home and thrive.

Another priority is research. We are an "R1" (preeminent) research institution, and much of this ground-breaking work happens right here in L&S. I intend to support and elevate research opportunities for faculty, graduate students and undergraduates. The knowledge that we take for granted today is based on curiosity-driven scholarship and creativity that started decades ago. Now, more than ever, we need to feed that intellectual flame. We need those big-picture thinkers to help us solve complex problems and expand the horizons of what we know.

By the time you read this, if all goes as planned, the fall semester will be well underway, with a mix of remote learning and in-person courses, as well as comprehensive protocols for keeping everyone safe. The year ahead will not be easy, but we will not lose heart. We will dig in—because that's what Badgers do.

Thank you for all you do to support L&S. It means the world to us.

On, Wisconsin!



Eric M. Wilcots, Dean of the College of Letters & Science
Mary C. Jacoby Professor of Astronomy



MITTEILUNGEN AUS MADISON is the annual newsletter of the German Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Edited by Sabine Gross, with Julie Larson-Guenette and Sabine Mödersheim

Layout by Thor Rothering

Cover photo: Partially frozen Lake Mendota is seen from Observatory Hill at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during a snowy winter day on January 13, 2020. Annual seasonal freeze dates for Madison's lakes are frequently trending later each year, with the record for the latest complete ice cover of Lake Mendota being January 30. (Photo by Jeff Miller / UW-Madison)

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Emeritus Professor Jost Hermand at 90: A Living Legend

By Marc Silberman



Above: Jost gazing at the Jost-Eiche, joined by Marc Silberman and Carol Poore. [photos courtesy of Sabine Groß]

Wow, a birthday party for our 90-year-old colleague Jost Hermand! In fall 2018 two of Jost's PhD students from long ago mentioned to me that his 90th birthday was approaching in April 2020, and should be celebrated. A half year later I emailed them, asking if they had made any progress on the plans for the birthday party. To my surprise, they were expecting me to take this in hand. So in summer 2019, I asked another of Jost's former PhDs, Carol Poore, now retired in Madison, for some help. As word spread, it became clear that my house would be way too small. We shifted gears, arranged for a banquet at the UW's University Club, and began sending out invitations. Before we knew it, the guest list had over 60 names from around the world for the party on April 18, 2020.

Then the Covid pandemic hit. On March 16 the State of Wisconsin announced that gatherings with over 50 people were prohibited. Carol and I decided with heavy hearts and in consultation with Jost to cancel the birthday bash. Instead we asked everyone to send Jost a personal greeting to his home address. Indeed, he received dozens of cards, photographs, and letters, which surprised and touched him.

Meanwhile, Carol had come up with a brilliant idea for a birthday gift. We arranged that an oak tree planted two years earlier in the Allen Centennial Garden on the UW campus would feature a plaque recognizing the occasion of the 90th birthday. We hoped to present it in early summer. Again reality

intervened: a campus lockdown, the Allen Garden closed, the plaque engraver shut down, no one to set a boulder next to the tree for mounting the plaque. We learned finally in late August that the plaque was ready, the boulder had been delivered and put into place, and a maximum of four (masked) guests would be allowed to enter the Allen Garden.

This triggered the “emergency” plan to get an unsuspecting Jost to campus. I invented a story that I needed to take a couple of photos of him to send to concerned alumni. On Sunday morning, August 30, I picked him up and we drove to Allen Garden where – to his surprise – Carol Poore and Sabine Groß were waiting. Chatting away, without explanation, we led him to the Wisconsin Woodland section of the botanical garden and casually pulled aside the piece of burlap covering



Above: Jost next to 'his' oak tree and plaque in Allen Centennial Garden.

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Above: The commemorative plaque that marks the Jost-Eiche.

the large boulder with the beautiful bronze plaque next to the young oak tree. Jost was completely taken by surprise, actually speechless – which isn't typical for him – and very moved by the unexpected and belated birthday gift as well as the generosity of all who contributed to making it possible.

Sabine read the complete poem by Heinrich Heine that yielded the line engraved on the plaque (“Es erklingen alle Bäume”), and Carol presented some thoughts about the meaning of the tree and the dedication, from which I quote the following:

“Jost, you’ve often said that you didn’t want any presents, so in thinking about how to honor you, it was actually rather easy to come up with the idea of dedicating an oak tree in your honor. There are many reasons why this is appropriate.

First, as a gardener yourself, you have often enjoyed walking through the Allen Garden, this campus jewel and utopian oasis. Second, the Allen Garden is the only place where we could place a beautiful plaque with an appropriate inscription. More generally, an oak tree is full of symbolism relating to your scholarship, political concerns, aesthetic

sensibilities, and utopian hopes. As you wrote in one of your many publications on ecology, “Mein Baum ist Dein Baum,” which means that we all need to take responsibility for nature together in order to preserve and enhance the beauty of the world around us.

Planting a tree is a profound act of hope for the future. Just as your books are steadfast messages to the future, and just as your influence on your students and friends continues to ripple outwards and onwards in untold ways, we hope that this little tree will grow into a mighty green canopy, a haven full of beauty and inspiration.”

Jost is doing fine and is quite rigorous about isolating himself for health reasons because of the pandemic. He just sent a new book manuscript off to his publisher (Böhlau Verlag) with the title *Oasen der Utopie* and is already at work on his next project. On behalf of all involved, we thank everyone who helped make possible this splendid and enduring gift, and we hope that you too can visit in the future to admire the “Jost-Eiche” in the Allen Garden.

Losing a Famed and Fabled Colleague

By Sabine Groß

For all of us who had the privilege of knowing Klaus Berghahn, it still seems difficult to believe that he is no longer among us. For our alumni and especially Klaus's former students (including 30 students who wrote their dissertations with him), it may be impossible to imagine Van Hise without Klaus, who passed away on November 1, 2019 at the age of 82. Not just because he was a fixture in the German department (which he also chaired for several years), but also because with his energy and enthusiasm and love of life and learning, Klaus often seemed larger than life. "Larger than life" also holds for his enduring reputation as a scholar who made major contributions to a number of important fields, among them Enlightenment Studies (in particular, Schiller and Lessing), theater, German-Jewish thought and its cultural context. His scholarship on utopian ideas and thinking always seemed particularly well aligned with his life-affirming attitude.

One would need pages and pages to list all of Klaus's accomplishments and do justice to his prolific publication record, the projects that he conceived and carried out, and the enduring impact he has had on the profession, his colleagues and students. Let me cite summarily from the Memorial Resolution that Klaus's colleague Marc Silberman presented to the University Faculty Senate on November 2, 2020: "A member of the UW faculty for 40 years until his retirement in 2007, he was an internationally known scholar, a master teacher, a prominent academic citizen both on our campus and throughout the world, and a passionate humanist who served as an energizing role model for students as well as colleagues." But these words of farewell need to be more personal, not least because Klaus thrived in the personal relationships he developed and cultivated, infusing them with his puckish sense of humor. It is hard to imagine what he would have made of the current pandemic and the need to practice cautious distancing. His wife Doris helped him bridge the personal, intellectual, and professional: she created the gracious hospitality that made one look forward to a dinner gathering at the Berghahns eagerly and recall favorite gatherings with particularly illustrious guests for years. Her death in early 2019 left him bereft after more than six decades spent together.



[photos courtesy of Charles James]

Klaus was my faculty mentor during my first years in the Department of German in the 1990s – a generous and stimulating presence, always seeking an exchange of ideas that he would happily see develop into a spirited debate. Sometimes one felt that harmony of thought bored him: he seemed happiest when he had managed to incite *Widerspruch*, words of opposition, and interactions with Klaus would regularly include moments of exasperation along with collegiality, humor, gratitude, and admiration. Early in my years in Madison, I asked him whether I could sit in on his graduate seminar on theater – a shared interest – and he immediately invited me to do so. In the initial session, I followed the discussion quietly, not wanting to change the dynamic in the room – with the result that after the session, he urged me to participate with the words: "Why don't you say anything? Contradict me!" His authority was indisputable, as was his genuine commitment to others' professional success and his ability to create opportunities for colleagues and students, be it in the Center for German and European Studies whose Founding Director he was,

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or in the numerous major conferences he organized and hosted. After becoming an emeritus, Klaus continued to visit Van Hise regularly. As department chair in the early 2010s, I always looked forward to those visits, when he would appear in my door, usually with a smile on his face, telling me to work less, enthusing about his new study, or sharing an anecdote.

Klaus did not live life in neutral. Invited by Klaus's son Marcus and his wife Laura to the Memorial Union to celebrate Klaus's life on November 10, 2019, we gathered from near and far to share our favorite Klaus stories and reminisce. He has left an enduring legacy in so many ways; we miss him; we will remember him.



Matching Challenge

Help us commemorate Klaus Berghahn by establishing a permanent endowment for the Klaus Berghahn Prize!

The German Department/Program has the privilege of annually awarding the Klaus Berghahn Prize, recognizing exceptional work by an undergraduate and a graduate student who receive the award for the best paper on a topic in German literature or culture. Klaus Berghahn himself established the prize in 2008; faculty submit outstanding work by students every year to a committee that makes the final selection. The Prize means a lot to the recipients! Undergraduates and graduates alike are grateful for the monetary award, but beyond that, the award signals intellectual quality and promise. It may nudge an undergraduate to think about graduate studies or help them land a prestigious internship or position; it strengthens graduate students' profiles and confirms the excellence of their writing and research skills as they enter the job market. After he became an emeritus, Klaus always looked forward particularly to the annual German awards banquet, where he met the prize winners in person and heard about their work in German.

The Klaus Berghahn Prize is one of the many ways in which Klaus's name lives on – in our department, among our students, and in the profession nationally and internationally. A bequest from Klaus himself has laid the foundation for endowing the Klaus Berghahn Prize in perpetuity, and a generous additional matching-challenge donation from the Berghahn family is now helping us to realize this plan. **All additional gifts to the Klaus Berghahn Prize Fund will be matched fully up to a total of \$15,000 by the Berghahn family.**

To donate to the Klaus Berghahn Prize Fund:

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Send a check made payable to the UW Foundation, indicating "Berghahn Prize Fund, 112436476, German, GNS," to:

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Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807

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Use this link <https://www.supportuw.org/giveto/Berghahn>

Faculty News 2020

Salvatore Calomino

I continued to work with manuscripts and documents at the Newberry Library, Chicago. In addition to projects in medieval and Early Modern literature I worked further on the memoirs of Anna Bahr-Mildenburg and on early sources for the compositions of Christoph Willibald Ritter von Gluck. During the past spring semester I led a weekly reading and discussion group of our current graduate students on topics in Comparative Germanic Philology.

Monika Chavez

My plans for this past year—like everyone's—have fallen victim to the pandemic, with presentations cancelled and conventions held online. However, on the upside, I was able to finish the spring semester, including my beloved course on Austria. This fall semester, I am offering a new course that invites students not only to translate language & culture but also—in a special project—themselves. Also, in the fall I once again became director of the Doctoral Program in Second Language Acquisition, enabling me to increase the visibility of an important area of research. The perhaps best impressions left by this challenging year have been the many successes and milestones—in various arenas of life—of current and past graduate students.

Hannah Vandegrift Eldridge

Even before the pandemic, 2019-2020 was quite a year! I taught three new courses, published articles marking the 250th anniversary of Friedrich Hölderlin's birth and the 100th anniversary of Paul Celan's, and finished my second book manuscript, *Metrical Claims and Poetic Experience: Nietzsche, Klopstock, Grünbein*. Collaboration with colleagues continues to be a pleasure, most recently Sabine Groß in organizing the 51st Wisconsin Workshop (and conference volume) on *Rhythms*, Sonja Klocke in co-editing *Monatshefte*, and Venkat Mani as a University Diversity Liaison. I've had enormous shoes to fill in replacing Monika Chavez as the Director of Graduate Studies for German, and I am awed by the courage and fortitude of our graduate students in these most unusual of times for the field and the world.

Sabine Groß

Co-hosting the 51st Wisconsin Workshop on *Rhythms* with Hannah Eldridge and welcoming a wonderful group of participants to Madison was one of the pleasures of this past year. A *Monatshefte* special issue with selected conference contributions is scheduled for 2021. Working with a student on another Senior Honors Thesis in German was another highlight. Converting a theater course (!) to online format in mid-semester when the year took its unexpected and dramatic turn was a challenge. Beginning my final year as Faculty Director of the L&S Honors Program, I've held enough virtual meetings during the past six months for a lifetime—while being profoundly grateful that we have the technology to connect virtually with such ease.

Sonja Klocke

The academic year 2019/20 was off to a good start: I was happy to be back in the classroom after my sabbatical, and to see my colleagues. The conference seminar I had co-organized for the German Studies Association conference in the fall of 2019 was a success, and in February 2020 I still attended a conference in Germany. When we started delivering course content remotely in March, this presented a challenging but also wonderful experience. My students were incredibly dedicated, and we all experienced the importance of being part of a community—if only online. The summer was spent working on various articles, among others for a Handbook on Germany's Economic Miracle. Currently, I am excited to learn something new every day in my new position as Director of the Center for German and European Studies (since August 2020).

Julie Larson-Guenette

I am now in my third year as a faculty associate in GNS and continue to work with Stockwerk Deutsch and teach in the undergraduate program. Jeanne Schueller and I have finished revising German 258 (intermediate reading) and will present on the course redesign this spring at the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Last fall I received a grant from the Language Institute to develop a topics course on the tradition of letters and letter writing (German 372, *Briefe als Medium*) to be offered this coming spring.

Mark Loudon

This past year I continued as Director of the Max Kade Institute and was active in multiple outreach projects, many of them related to my longstanding work with Amish and traditional Mennonite (Plain) communities across the state. For several years now I have served as a Pennsylvania Dutch interpreter in a variety of settings, which has led me to become a “cultural mediator” between Plain groups and outsiders, especially health-care providers. I now work closely with colleagues in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health and last year delivered presentations to medical groups on a number of topics, including burn and wound care, cancer, and COVID-19.

B. Venkat Mani

Despite challenges, 2020 brought good news and reason for hope. A *Companion to World Literature* (Wiley Blackwell) was launched at MLA 2020; in addition, I published an essay on minority rights in India in *The Wire* (Hindi), and one against racism and xenophobia in the US in *Inside Higher Ed*. I taught a newly designed undergraduate course, “Global Migrants and Refugees,” for the IS Major; and a virtual seminar on this topic for the tenth session of Harvard's Institute for World Literature. At the GSA's virtual conference, I led an Emerging Scholars Workshop for graduate students across the nation. Working with the GNS+ Climate Committee, UW's Diversity Liaison fellows, and nationally with the German Studies Association's first Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Committee was very rewarding.

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Sabine Mödersheim

My sabbatical research focused on protest movements in Germany, and I was fortunate to find copies of 1970s anti-nuclear comic books and protest song records. I'm looking forward to teaching a new course "Lieber heute aktiv als morgen radioaktiv: Protestbewegungen in Deutschland" using these materials. I also discovered a treasure trove of GDR science fiction books and read far too many Perry Rhodan and other science fiction pulps in preparation for my new course on utopias, dystopias and sf in German literature. As always it was a great pleasure to mentor alumni setting out to grad school, new jobs, or scholarships.

Pamela Potter

Last fall, I was invited to lecture at the Max Planck Institut für empirische Ästhetik in Frankfurt, and although the pandemic may change my plans, I'm hoping to be able to deliver a lecture this spring at the symposium "Marx/Wagner" at the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin. I was also fortunate to receive a 12-month fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities to write my book on the history of Berlin as a music metropolis (a project that has occupied me for many years and involved the assistance of many graduate students in German). I'm also happy to see my new co-edited volume on music and World War II coming out this fall (Indiana University Press).

Jeanne Schueller

This year brought many firsts for me, including teaching online with the shift in spring to emergency remote learning, taking my first-ever online class over the summer, holding virtual master's exams, preliminary exams, and dissertation defenses, and conducting our pre-semester TA orientation remotely. My film class underwent its first overhaul since the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Currently, I am participating in a new yearlong seminar sponsored by UW-Madison's Language Institute that provides a forum for discussing social justice and inclusion, diversity, equity, and access in postsecondary language teaching and learning. Although I long to return to in-person activities, I welcome opportunities to connect virtually with colleagues and students from near and far.

Katerina Somers

My academic year began auspiciously with the 51st Wisconsin Workshop: Rhythms, where I presented a paper entitled "Metrical choices as cultural turning point: a ninth-century German case study." I also entered the year-long Madison Teaching and Learning Excellence program. I had no notion that opportunities to meet face-to-face with colleagues to discuss teaching and research would soon evaporate. Since beginning to spend more time at home in 2020, I have continued work on my book, *Orality, Literacy and the Syntax of Early Medieval German*, wrote an article based on my Rhythms talk and had an article accepted for publication at the *Journal of Germanic Linguistics*. I've also cultivated a regular meditation practice, converted our garage into a home gym, and watched a not insubstantial amount of Netflix.

Adam Stern

Over this past year, I have had a number of opportunities to further my research and teaching. At the end of February, I visited Wesleyan University, where I gave a guest lecture on Hannah Arendt to a joint session of two undergraduate classes being offered on her work. I am also pleased to report that my first book, *Survival: A Theological-Political Genealogy*, will be published by University of Pennsylvania Press in February 2021. At the moment, I am developing a new course for spring 2021 on "Psychoanalysis." This course is aimed at undergraduate students across departments, including GNS, English, Psychology, and History.

Jolanda Vanderwal Taylor

I have continued to focus my energies on the Dutch program and have enjoyed teaching courses on topics such as "Holocaust, Occupation, Memory," "New Netherland," "Low Countries or High Water?" and "Anne Frank." The Dutch program continues to be blessed with excellent graduate instructors who engage our Dutch language students with skillful and inspired teaching. Students in our program have received FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies) grants in support of their Dutch studies. They have also studied abroad in Utrecht, though that program was sadly interrupted this spring by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, I have served on review committees, as unit head of German+, and as Associate Chair in GNS.

Sunny Yudkoff

2020 began with lots of movement. In January, I attended the MLA in Seattle and in February I traveled to Cambridge, MA to present research at the *Jews in Modern Europe* Seminar at Harvard University. While in the Boston area, I visited the archive of writer Leo Rosten at Brandeis University to conduct research on the reception history of his bestselling lexicon, *The Joys of Yiddish* (1968). Since the onset of COVID-19, I've stayed put in Madison, where I've continued to explore the legacy of Rosten's writing in the contemporary work of conceptual artist Mel Bochner.

And here's news from some of our emeriti:

Jost Hermand

I am still the editor-in-chief of the Oxford series *German Life and Civilization*. Besides that I published the following books during the past year: A revised edition of my book *Beethoven. Werk und Wirkung* (2019), *Brennpunkt Ökologie. Kulturelle und gesamtgesellschaftliche Interventionen* (2020) and "Völker, hört die Signale!" *Zum Bekennermut deutsch-jüdischer Sozialisten und Sozialistinnen* (2020) as well as an article on Richard Hamann (2020). I was also named an honorary member of the Hans-Mayer-Gesellschaft. Jürgen Pelzer and Sabine Kebir published articles about me for my 90th birthday. I thank Marc Silberman and Carol Poore for their efforts to organize my 90th birthday celebration, which unfortunately could not take place, and Brian Wilt for his assistance in preparing my book manuscripts.

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Charles James

Freiburg im Breisgau celebrated its 900th birthday in 2020, or at least it was supposed to. Because of the virus, we in the Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee were unable to visit Freiburg and celebrate with our friends in the Freiburg-Madison Gesellschaft. We hope to make this up in 2021. Two other members of our Board of Directors are members of GNS, Julie Larson-Guenette and Sabine Mödersheim. I am still President, at least until we can hold an annual meeting where we can plan the next two years. I am also Chair of Madison's Sister City Collaboration Committee until we can meet again to choose a new Chair.

Cora Lee Kluge

As president of the Society for German-American Studies (SGAS), I led efforts last fall to organize what promised to be a successful and exciting symposium in Georgetown in April. The end of October, I traveled to Washington, D.C., where I conferred with our contacts at the conference venue and represented the SGAS at the annual meeting of the Board of

Directors of the Friends of the German Historical Institute. Then came spring, and COVID-19 forced us to call off our plans. We are now facing the possibility that our next symposium, scheduled to take place in Madison in April 2021, may also have to be cancelled, and we are exploring possible alternatives.

Marc Silberman

After four years of retirement I'm hitting my pace. In fall 2019 I enjoyed travels: to Portland (GSA conference and some hiking), to Iceland and then Amsterdam, Prague (for a Brecht conference), and Berlin, finally to Seattle (MLA convention), and Miami Beach. In spring semester 2020 co-teaching the large-enrollment "Nazi Culture" course with Jost Hermand and Pam Potter, we were "hit" by the pandemic and shifted online. But life goes on. I completed the translation of Thomas Köck's play *atlas* (Leipzig Schauspielhaus), which earned an honorable mention from the American Literary Translators Association, and participated in June in a one-week (virtual) theater translator's workshop sponsored by the Berlin-based International Theatre Institute.

Felines, Fairy Tales and Fireflies: Welcoming (Back) Melissa Sheedy

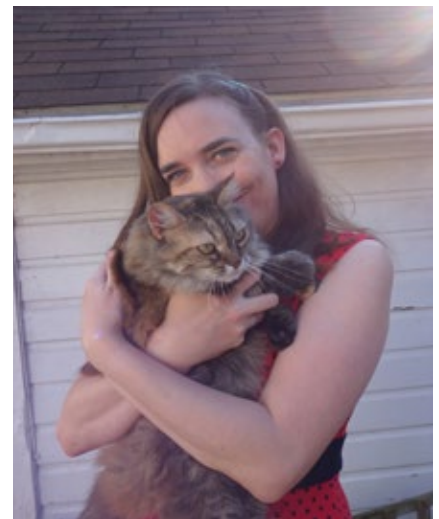
This August, amid the pandemic and resulting instructional uncertainty, the German Program welcomed alumna Melissa Sheedy as our new Lecturer. Melissa received her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a dissertation on *Romanticism Reloaded: Romantic Trajectories in Contemporary German Literature*. Before returning to her *alma mater*, she taught in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Coming back to Madison—"it was pure joy to see fireflies again" she observes—Melissa is most excited about the opportunity to develop new courses and continue working with the students who make this campus so special. Melissa found the switch to mostly remote instruction challenging, she says, "but also rewarding, as teaching almost always is regardless of modality." She feels lucky to be able to teach "the kinds of classes where students feel seen and recognized." What she likes best about remote teaching: "Getting to meet everyone's pets, students' and colleagues' alike!" Among all of this change, Melissa found it striking to see what's stayed the same: fun classes, enthusiastic students, and welcoming and collaborative colleagues.

Melissa is particularly excited about the spring semester, when she'll be teaching a course on German fairytales and their enduring global impact. "From Grimm to Gryffindor" examines tales by the Grimms, of course, but will also look at stories, plays, films, poetry, and art from a variety of authors and time periods, with a special focus on (subversive) fairytales written by women. She is looking forward to spending time in the course with topics such as gender roles, witches, cats, tricksters, queering the Grimms, and, yes, *Harry Potter*.

With a PhD minor in Slavic Studies here at UW (and a cat named Pushkin), Melissa's interests intersect with other areas of the GNS+ family. Among her fields are the literature and cinema of the former GDR, in particular their famous fairytale films. Connecting with colleagues in the Folklore program, she will have a chance to explore the Grimm traditions in a global context.

The Midwest means greenery and humidity and fluffy white clouds and a plentiful supply of local cheese to Melissa. In her free time, she looks forward to enjoying Madison's distinct seasons, playing guitar and cross-stitching, and maintaining her self-designation of "video game fiend."



Why German?

Each spring, a number of our undergraduates win awards for their outstanding work in German. Here's what a few of them have to say about their experiences with German:



Charlotte Herbolzheimer from Glenview, IL, is triple-majoring in German, Spanish, and Communication Sciences and Disorders.

GNS is a challenging program that also allows creative exploration of the German language and culture. The faculty and curriculum itself stimulate and reward individual participation and perspectives. My recent travels to Berlin and my ability to communicate effectively while abroad are evidence of the robust education I have received at UW. Most importantly, this program has instilled in me and my fellow students a love and appreciation of the country, the culture and the people of Germany.

Aaron Greenberg hails from St. Louis, Missouri, and is pursuing degrees in Linguistics and German with additional work in the Russian Flagship Program.

Studying German in GNS has been an amazing experience. It's given me opportunities to forge both professional and personal bonds while allowing me to better my German beyond what I thought was possible in a non-German-speaking environment.



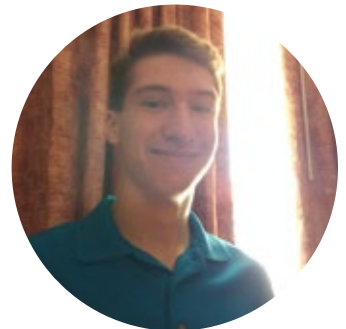
Grace Carlson, from Sussex, WI, is pursuing a BS in Chemistry with certificates in German and Education & Educational Services.

Studying German in GNS has allowed me to not only better my knowledge and ability in speaking, reading, and writing in German, but it also is a place where I am able to take enjoyable courses that pique my personal interests and learn about topics outside of my major.



Joey Washburn from Mukwonago, WI, is majoring in Computer Science and German.

This department has given me unparalleled access to not only vast libraries of resources, but also the most knowledgeable and approachable staff a student could hope for.



Mandy Xinyu Lin ('20), from Hangzhou, China, majored in Elementary and Special Education.

Learning German has brought me many opportunities that I never thought of, and I appreciate the community GNS created for German learners. To me, German is not only a foreign language but also the key to unlock the unknown world.



Responses to an Unprecedented Semester: a Student Perspective on the Pandemic

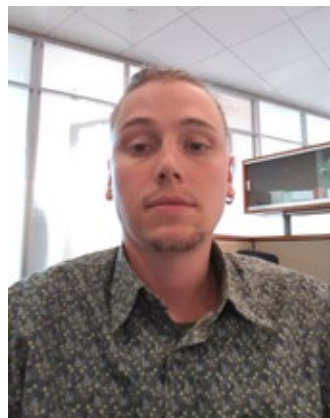
Spring Semester 2020 took an unanticipated turn when UW–Madison pivoted to remote instruction in March. Instructors scrambled to convert course content to remote delivery, the university hastily put together resources, time on-screen soared as faculty and students quickly learnt more about these modes of connecting. Many students faced steep challenges: losing jobs, needing to move back home, trying to support family members who fell sick or lost their employment. The situation demanded extraordinary resilience and adaptability in the face of many reasons for worry and anxiety.

Students in Sabine Groß's new 300-level course "Theater auf Deutsch" managed to continue a form of "live" theater via synchronous screen connections. The class came together via BBC Ultra for discussions and small-group work and successfully performed semi-staged readings with added visuals.

As part of the final course assignment, students were invited to write reflections (in German) on how the instructional upheaval had affected them, how they had managed, and how it had changed their perspective. Here are some excerpts:

Stu Fass: Normalerweise arbeite ich in einem Pizzarestaurant, ich mache freiwillig ein Praktikum, ich mache Forschung und gehe wöchentlich zu einem Robotikklub, aber durch die Pandemie wurde alles abgebrochen. Diese Situation ließ mir mehr Zeit zu lernen. Auch weil ich nicht meine Wohnung verlassen musste, sparte ich diese Zeit für andere Dinge. Am besten war, dass ich nicht weiter eine spezifische Zeit habe, zu der ich aufwachen muss. Mehr Schlaf bedeutet, dass ich sehr wenig Kaffee getrunken habe, deswegen habe ich viel Kaffeegegeld gespart. Diese neue Freizeit gibt mir auch die Möglichkeit zu trainieren, Gewichte zu heben und zu joggen. Ironisch, dass diese Krankheit gut für meine Gesundheit ist.

Ein normales Semester hat Ebbe und Flut, Stress und Entspannung, Prüfungen und Partys. Normalerweise sitzt man die ganze Woche am Laptop oder in der Bibliothek und danach kommt schon Freitag und ich konnte mich letztlich austoben, mit Freunden treffen und mich betrinken und morgen geht's weiter mit Lernen. Aber mit der Isolation gibt es keine Freilassung, sondern nur weiter lernen oder andere Dinge auf meinem Laptop. Videospiele, Film und soziale Medien sind Spaß und unterhaltsam, aber nicht, wenn sie das einzige Unterhaltungsmittel sind.



Stu Fass, in COVID-19 mode, where much of students' class time is spent in front of a screen.

Für mich war am schwierigsten die Trennung zwischen mir und meiner normalen Arbeitsgruppe. Ich bin im Grunde ein fauler Mensch und ich bin abhängig von sozialem Druck, um am besten zu lernen.

Claire Danen: Es gab viel mehr Freiheit, so dass ich mir für drei meiner Kurse die Vorlesungen ansehen und das Material lernen konnte, wann immer ich wollte. Ich musste nur sicher sein, dass ich rechtzeitig auf die Prüfung vorbereitet war.

Während die Vorlesungen ziemlich gleich blieben, musste sich die Art und Weise, wie ich lernte, definitiv ändern. Ich habe zu Hause keinen funktionierenden Drucker, da war es schwierig, mich zu gewöhnen, Notizen auf meinem Laptop zu machen. Der Versuch, gleichzeitig Vorlesungen zu sehen, war der schwierigste Teil, aber schließlich gewöhnte ich mich daran. Ich kann mich persönlich sehr leicht motivieren, bin kein Zauderer und kann leicht einen Zeitplan festlegen und befolgen. Einer der besten Vorteile ist, dass ich immer genug Schlaf habe.

Ich habe festgestellt, dass ich Online-Kurse viel mehr mag, als ich jemals gedacht habe, und ich werde jetzt viel offener dafür sein, sie in meinen Stundenplan aufzunehmen.

Hailey Enders: Dieses Frühlingssemester war wie eine Achterbahnfahrt. Mein Hauptfach ist Deutsch, also sind drei meiner vier Kurse Deutsch. Reden spielt eine entscheidende Rolle in jedem Fremdsprachenunterricht. Wie könnten meine Kurse online funktionieren?

Ich fand meine Kurse durch den „remote“-Modus schwieriger als normal, denn es war eine wesentliche Anpassung für mich. Ich verbrachte mehr als acht Stunden pro Tag damit, für meine Kurse zu arbeiten.

continued on next page →

Die Situation mit dem „remote“-Modus war nicht vorbildlich für mich. Es war schwierig, so lange auf einen Laptop-Bildschirm zu sehen. Lernen in einer anderen Umgebung als der Universität war eine Herausforderung, weil es schwer war, sich zu konzentrieren.

Beim Blick zurück auf das Semester werde ich mich erinnern, dass ich viele Herausforderungen überwand und ich fühle mich privilegiert, Professor*innen zu haben, die fleißig arbeiten, um die Bedürfnisse ihrer Studenten zu unterstützen. Ich werde dieses Semester wegen der besonderen Umstände nie vergessen.



GNS+ student Hailey Enders.

Katie Freitag: Im normalen Semester habe ich keine Zeit für mich selbst, weil ich so viel zu tun habe. Aber dieses Semester habe ich mehr Zeit und ich habe gemerkt, dass ich das brauche. Eine Schwierigkeit war die Motivation zum Lernen und Hausaufgaben machen. Gewöhnlich habe ich eine sehr gute Arbeitsmoral, so gut, dass viele Menschen mir gratulieren. Jetzt mache ich meine Aufgaben später und habe nicht die gleiche Motivation.

In der Zukunft werde ich in meinen Kursen dankbar arbeiten und werde mich über den Spaziergang zur Klasse nicht beklagen. Auch über die Klassenkameraden werde ich nicht klagen, denn ich vermisse sie. Und schließlich: Wenn ich sehr viel Stress habe, werde ich Pausen machen und trainieren, mich selbst ruhig zu machen.

Jack Weronka: Zuerst dachte ich, dies wäre eine erstaunliche Gelegenheit für mich, mich während meines Studiums ein wenig zu entspannen und vielleicht sogar etwas Schlaf nachzuholen. Nach meiner ersten Woche Online-Unterricht hatte ich jedoch festgestellt, dass dies nicht der Fall sein würde.

Anfangs war es sehr aufregend, in einer Zeit zu leben, die in die Geschichtsbücher eingehen wird, aber als die Zahl der Todesopfer und die Infektionsrate weiter anstiegen, begann ich mir ein wenig Sorgen zu machen und zog tatsächlich wieder zu meinen Eltern

Ich denke, man kann mit Sicherheit sagen, dass ich das, was wir früher als normal angesehen haben, nicht mehr als selbstverständlich ansehen werde. Eine schöne

Sache bei der Umstellung auf Online-Kurse ist, dass alle Diskussionen und Vorträge online veröffentlicht werden, was mir und sicher vielen anderen Studenten eine gewisse Flexibilität beim Ansehen des Materials gibt. Ich muss nicht mehr um 8 Uhr morgens aufwachen, um zu einer Vorlesung auf der anderen Seite des Campus zu gelangen, und kann jetzt aufwachen, wann ich möchte und mich von meinem Bett aus auf eine Vorlesung einstellen. Diese Flexibilität kann auch gefährlich sein, da sie oft mit Aufschub einhergeht. Beispielsweise fällt es mir schwer, am Wochenende meine E-Mails zu lesen.

Karinna Piwek: Es war für mich sehr wichtig, dass ich in unserem Kurs mit Student(inn)en persönlich arbeiten konnte. Deshalb war es für mich sehr schwierig, als der Unterricht zum Online-Format wechselte. Es war und ist immer noch schwierig meine Kursarbeit zu strukturieren. Es war immer besser für mich, wenn ich zum Unterricht gehen konnte. Wenn es festgelegte Zeiten gibt, bin ich konzentriert darauf, was ich machen muss und wann Aufgaben fällig sind. Mit COVID-19 veränderte sich alles in einer Woche.

Am meisten vermisse ich es persönlich mit anderen zu kommunizieren. Es war eine große Hilfe für mich, besonders bei Physik- und Biologie-Kursen. Viele von meinen Kursen sind auf Problemlösen basiert. Mit anderen arbeiten ist ein wichtiger Teil des Lernens. Es war mit dem Online-Format allerdings leichter mich im Unterricht zu melden.

Izzie Solberg: Dieses Semester war auf jeden Fall das schwierigste Semester, seit ich an die Universität kam, aber wir machen gerade Geschichte und deswegen finde ich diese Zeit auch spannend. Es war einfach schwierig zu akzeptieren, dass meine nahe Zukunft nicht in meiner Kontrolle war. So lange zu Hause zu bleiben, ohne Freunde, ohne andere Orte, wo ich lernen konnte, nur auf Handy oder Laptop, um Leute zu erreichen und auch zu lernen ist echt hart.

Allgemein habe ich diese Zeit benutzt, Neues zu machen. Zum Beispiel habe ich mehr auf meine Gesundheit aufgepasst. Kochen wurde auch mein neues Hobby und macht ganz viel Spaß. Ich backe sehr gern Brot und wenn ich Abendessen koche, macht es mir viel Freude, es mit meiner Mitbewohnerin zu teilen. Da ich diese Sachen so genossen habe, habe ich mich entschieden, Teile dieser Zeit positiv zu sehen. Diese "Pause" war eine Chance für mich, mehr Zeit mit meiner Familie zu verbringen, mehr Aufmerksamkeit auf meine Gesundheit zu geben und einfach das Leben mehr anzuerkennen.

Am beeindruckendsten während der ganzen Zeit ist, wie viele Menschen zusammengekommen sind, um einander zu helfen. Ich hoffe, dass wir nach COVID-19 weiter mit so einer inklusiven, dankbaren Denkweise leben können.

Stockwerk Deutsch Update

Julie Larson-Guenette continues in her role as the program director for Stockwerk Deutsch offering a one-credit seminar this fall titled *Deutsche Sprache(n) in globalen Kontexten*. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and strict limitations on gathering in the residence halls, the Stockis engage in a variety of virtual and socially-distant activities with graduate student Gemini Fox serving as the Graduate Language Program Coordinator (GLPC). Fall activities have included online streaming of films, a fall hike out to Picnic Point, watching the debates while chatting on WhatsApp, and virtual games via Discord.

Right: A socially-distant Stocki seminar in 2650 Humanities.
On Wisconsin! [photo courtesy of Julie Larson-Guenette]



German Graduate Program News

Our graduate students have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adapted to challenging circumstances this year. They have been a resource as we all adjusted to remote-synchronous teaching and have achieved a number of successes (in addition to hosting the 21st Annual GDGSA Conference). This fall, we welcomed five new students to our Graduate Program in German. Here are some highlights of continuing students:

Leah Ewing passed her PhD prelims in August 2020 and presented a paper on “Identity, Refugeetude and Borderlands in Ali Fitzgerald’s *Drawn to Berlin*” at the 8th Biennial Graduate Student Conference of the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Texas, Austin in March, on the topic of “Borders.”

Nicole Fischer passed her PhD prelims in spring 2020, received the coveted L&S Teaching Fellows Award for 2020 as well as the Berghahn Prize in Literature, and had a paper accepted for the Kalamazoo Medieval Congress.

Brandy Wilcox co-organized a conference panel “Raging and Resisting: Women’s Anger in German Culture,” published “Brothers Grimm: Oral-to-Literary Translation of Fairy Tales” in *A Companion to World Literature*, Volume 4, presented a talk at Lawrence University on “The Cultural Curiosities of Disney’s Animated Films from Snow White to Frozen II” in February 2020, and is working on an article on “Gender and Sexuality in New ‘Originals’ of Rapunzel” for a 2021 special issue of *German Quarterly*.

Ian McQuiston has completed a Fulbright Fellowship year at IMIS (Institut für Migrationsforschung und Interkulturelle Studien) at Uni Osnabrück and a graduate Research Assistantship at the Center for German and European Studies and is working on his dissertation. He presented at Hermes Consortium in Gießen, the GSA conference in Portland in October 2019, and the graduate student conference at UT Austin in March 2020.

Joel Kaipainen defended his dissertation “Creative Destruction: The Financial Crisis and Cultural Production” in October 2019 and accepted a position with CENGAGE Education Technology.

Lucian Rothe, another recipient of the L&S Teaching Fellows Award, defended his dissertation and accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Louisville beginning in fall 2020.

Matthew Greene presented at Harvard’s Institute for World Literature in July 2020, passed his PhD prelims in August 2020, and submitted a co-authored translation/explication of an excerpt from a previously unknown Yiddish-language testimony of a Treblinka camp survivor to “Briv funem arkhiv” at the Yiddish Studies journal *In geveb*. In 2019, he received a University Housing Honored Instructor Award.

Richard Hronek defended his dissertation in fall 2020 and has submitted an article on Jakob Arjouni’s Kayankaya novels for an edited volume.

Alayna Bruney received her MA in May 2020, **Chen Chen** and **Sophia Strietholt** passed their PhD prelims in Fall 2020, and **Julia Anderlé de Saylor** defended her dissertation in May 2020.

Finally, our alumnus **Mark Kloiber** (MA’19), featured in our 2019 *Mitteilungen*, was recently promoted to Major (with several members of our German Program attending the online ceremony).

“Sound” - The 2019 German and Dutch Graduate Student Conference

21 Years and Counting

On the evening of November 1st last year, the sounds of Daniel Morse’s “Nachtlied” and voices chatting in various languages filled the hallway of Memorial Union. *Sound*, the German and Dutch Graduate Student Conference of 2019, was about to start and exciting presentations were going to take place over the next twenty-four hours.

Every year, the GDGSA Conference has brought graduate student scholars together to share current research and engage in conversation covering a variety of topics related to German and Dutch Studies. On November 1st and 2nd 2019, the GDGSA held its 21st conference, on the topic of “Sound.” Our audience included a variety of graduate and undergraduate students as well as professors from various departments at UW–Madison and local community members. Eight graduate students from six different universities from as far away as Antwerp presented at the conference, including three of our own UW–Madison graduate students: Sarah Ferchau, Julia Anderlér de Saylor, and Leah Ewing. Presentations covered a wide range of topics, from sound in memoirs of the second World War to the music of the band Kraftwerk to a new interpretation of Notker’s *Anlautgesetz*.

The conference began on Friday afternoon with a pedagogy workshop entitled “Sounding out Language” led by Dr. Sabine Groß, in which attendees experienced sound in various ways. This workshop provided graduate students with practical applications of different sound experiments for the classroom.

Following Dr. Groß’s workshop, Dr. Tyler Whitney from the University of Michigan closed the Friday evening session with a keynote lecture entitled “Remediating National Socialism: Radio, Sound Film, and the Aesthetics of War.” His talk looked at how sound radically changed the medium, meaning and potential of film, how radio contributed to the dismantling of physical boundaries by bringing voices from the outside into the home, and how the new technology of television expanded upon radio’s power during the time of National Socialism. Dr. Whitney also led a closing discussion on Saturday between the audience and presenters. Reflections included connections presenters made between their own research and other papers, as well as reflections on the conference as a whole.

Thanks to the generous funding from the German Program, the Center for German and European Studies, and the Wisconsin Experience Grant, presenters and audience members connected further during the conference dinner at the Great Dane and a closing reception on Saturday at UW’s very German Rathskeller. The conception, recruitment, and organization of the 21st GDGSA Conference lay in the hands of German graduate students Leah Ewing, Nicole Fischer, and Sophia Strietholt.

Below: Participants in the workshop “Sounding out Language”.



Academic Year in Freiburg

AYF Program Suspended in March 2020

2019-20 AYFers had their time in Freiburg cut short due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The program was cancelled for the Sommersemester and the students had to return to the US at short notice. This was not helped by the conflicting messages and uncertainty about closing borders. Giving up their student apartments with belongings that they could not take home with them and scrambling for airline tickets at short notice meant not only mental stress, but severe financial hardship.



The two alumni associations—AYF Alumni Organizations Academic Year Freiburg Alumni Association (AYFAA) and the AYF Alumni & Friends (AAAF)—organized an emergency fundraiser and AYF alumni and friends from near and far stepped up to the plate and raised more than \$11,000. The Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee under the leadership of Professor emeritus Charles James contributed \$2,000.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the AYF program was suspended for the full 2020-21 Academic Year with plans to reopen the program next September; recruiting is under way with enthusiastic interest from students.

Left: Jacob Bartelt and Anastasiya Kelnhofer, recipients of the Sister City Scholarship given out by the City of Freiburg to AYF students from Madison.
[photos courtesy of Ulrich Struve]

Emergency Fundraiser Continues

Every cent of that \$11,000 has already been disbursed to ten 2019-20 AYF students to assist with basic living expenses like rent, health care, tuition, and groceries. The AYFAA and AYF Alumni & Friends have also added money from their limited operating funds to support this mission.

Thank you so very much for selflessly giving to students at risk of dropping out of university, living without affordable access to healthcare, and potentially facing eviction during a pandemic. Without your gift, we could not have met the students' urgent needs.

On behalf of everyone on the AYFAA, the Alumni & Friends board, the program directors, and each aid recipient, thank you again; we are so very grateful for your contribution!

For the combined Alumni Club Boards,
Elizabeth Kunze,
Membership Committee Chair, Academic Year Freiburg Alumni Association (AYFAA)
Kimberly Mueller
President, AYF Alumni & Friends (AAAF)

~ Alumni wishing to support the Club's **Fundraising Initiative in the United States** will find details on the AYFAA Page <https://ayf-alumni.com/donate/>.

~ Alumni living in Germany can make a donation through the **German chapter of the AYF Alumni Club** <https://www.ayf-alumni.de/support-us/> to ensure their contributions are tax deductible in Germany.



Above: AYFAA and AYF Alumni & Friends directors met with Ulli Struve in March to discuss how to support AYF 2019-20 students experiencing financial crisis.

continued on next page →

AYF 60th Anniversary Celebration and Reunion Postponed to 2022

Due to the pandemic, plans for the 60th Anniversary Celebration and Reunion had to be postponed after the City of Freiburg cancelled most of their events celebrating the 900-Year Anniversary, including the Sister Cities Festival Weekend that would have been the key event for the anniversary celebration.

If you would like to receive updates regarding the AYF Anniversary Celebration and Reunion, please provide your contact information through our RSVP Interest Survey page (<https://www.ayf.uni-freiburg.de/alumni/visits/reunion-2020-survey/>).



AYF Alumni Stories

Barbara Jedele left Madison for Berlin: <https://gns.wisc.edu/2020/06/15/alumni-stories-barbara-jedele/>

While she served on the board of the Madison-Freiburg Sister City Committee, Barbara helped to establish a stipend for Madison students who find an internship in Freiburg and need financial assistance. For more information please contact Sabine Mödersheim (smoedersheim@wisc.edu).

The Podcast “Fernweh and Home” curated by AYF alumni Laura Downer and Michael Makowski features a program on AYF: “Fernweh and Home” speaks to students and administrators of the Academic Year in Freiburg Program about the program, what the AYF experience is like, and how it was birthed of German heritage in Wisconsin and the Midwest. <https://soundcloud.com/fernwehandhome>



Academic Year in Freiburg 2019-20: An Experience Cut Short

By Carly Peterson

Being in Freiburg was amazing, challenging, and unfortunately, entirely too short to be satisfying. The first months there were a never-ending parade of relearning how to accomplish simple daily tasks in a new environment. It was also a constant struggle to navigate forming new relationships while contending with a language and culture barrier. Through it all though, it was absolutely thrilling. There was so much new to discover and so much unknown that ‘boring’ dropped out of my vocabulary. I made friends in the program and we formed our own little community that was my support through everything. By the end of the *Wintersemester* in February I finally felt like I was getting the hang of what it meant to live and study in Germany. The break between semesters offered me a chance to further get to know Freiburg and I took several day trips going from one end of a *Straßenbahnlinie* to the other, or spending an afternoon searching through the Altstadt for the best place to buy yarn or embroidery supplies. I even visited Berlin for a couple of days.

Near midnight on my last day in Berlin, moments after telling my mother to cancel her trip due to the virus, I received word that the entire AYF Program was cancelled. It is a moment burned into my emotional memory. I had a bus back to Freiburg the next day, and I spent the time trying to figure out the logistics of moving back home. I had 24 hours to pack up everything, to say goodbye and to accept the new reality. Leaving a place that only a few weeks prior I had come to recognize as home was heart-breaking. Now, when I think back, I have a bit of the nostalgic glow, but more than anything, I just find myself thinking of things I never got to do: I never got to say goodbye to the women in my knitting circle, we never got to exchange numbers, I never taught the other college student in the group how to crochet, I’ll never get to see her Masters Project completed. I never got to see all my friends together again.

Ulli and Peter were fantastic at keeping us all updated and checking in to see how we were all doing. They helped guide us through an unprecedented moment in human history and I can’t thank them enough. In the end, we learned more, time passed, and the world keeps turning.

Diversity in German

In early 2020, colleagues from the German Program joined representatives from Scandinavian and Slavic for the first meeting of our newly formed departmental Diversity and Climate Committee. Among other things, the committee is charged with “build[ing] department practices and culture that enhance and promote diversity and a positive workplace climate.”

Our endeavors to take action for inclusion are not unique: in the field of German Studies/*Germanistik*, a transnational collective **Diversity, Decolonization, and the German Curriculum (DDGC)** has met at conferences and virtually and established guiding principles (<https://diversityingermancurriculum.weebly.com/>). Such principles and efforts have become more urgent—and go beyond scholarly matters—not least because the pandemic as well as national politics have led to public hostility and threats toward minorities, including our own students and colleagues.

The repeated acts of racist police violence this year have not only been deeply distressing; they have also sharpened attention to the systemic nature of racial injustice for many white people and some minority groups as well as encouraged more insistent discussions about the persistence of bias in our educational system.

The GNS Committee formulated a departmental statement condemning the August 23 shooting of Jacob Blake (which took place an hour away from Madison, in Kenosha) and outlined a course of action that included a number of steps, emphasizing that “these actions must take place on numerous levels—personal, institutional, societal—given the scope and depth of structural racism and injustice.” Although Madison, Kenosha, Minneapolis, Louisville, Charlottesville, and all of the other innumerable sites of racist violence in the United States might at first glance seem beyond the purview of German Studies, we challenge that view. Indeed, as scholars of German language, literature, linguistics, history, and culture, we feel a particular call to reflect on the structures that cast some human beings as ‘lesser’ than others and to bear witness to the consequences of dehumanization, whether based on race, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or country of origin.

Newly recommitted to this work that is not new, we have engaged in self-examination via a departmental survey that asked directly about race, diversity, and the climate of the department; we have started examining syllabi and book choices to reflect greater anti-racist and decolonizing pedagogy in our department courses and curricula; we are seeking funds for scholarships and support programs for Black students, especially current or potential PhD students; we will form study groups and identify readings; and we have committed to some funding for faculty, staff, and graduate students to pursue trainings in racial and social justice on the UW–Madison campus and elsewhere.

We know that each of us shares the responsibility to work against racism and for social justice. This is a task we undertake alongside you, our alumni, families, and friends, and we would be happy to share more about our work with you. Please write to us with your ideas, experiences, or challenges.

You can find our departmental diversity statement diversity here: <https://gns.wisc.edu/gns-statement-on-diversity/>

Situating Us in Place

The UW–Madison campus is located on the ancestral lands of the Ho-Chunk, on what they call Teejop, the Four Lakes. The 1832 treaty through which this land became available to build our university was an act of violence against the Ho-Chunk nation, followed by other acts of violence continuing over more than the next 100 years. You can read our departmental land acknowledgment here: <https://gns.wisc.edu/uw-madison-land-acknowledgement-statement/>

A new initiative at the UW–Madison, “Our Shared Future,” acknowledges the history of this land and of the Ho-Chunk Nation while inviting us to share in the pleasure of this special place and its spiritual traditions. Our department received an “Our Shared Future” heritage marker grant for 2020 (<https://oursharedfuture.wisc.edu/>).



Comet NEOWISE (Photo by Jeff Miller / UW-Madison)

Dear Alumni, Friends, and Supporters of the German Program

During this time of upheaval and adjustments, creating opportunities for our students is more important than ever.

Your support is vital in allowing us to:

- Offer fellowships to high-achieving 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.

We invite you to join your fellow alumni, friends, and supporters who have made a gift to German! Your gift makes it possible for us to do more.

Use the following links to make an online gift directly to:

UNDERGRADUATE EXCELLENCE FUND (GERMAN)

<http://www.supportuw.org/giving?seq=17625>

ETHEL ANTRIM BIRD NETHERLANDIC STUDIES FUND

<http://www.supportuw.org/giving?seq=17642>

GERMAN DEPARTMENT ENHANCEMENT FUND

<http://www.supportuw.org/giving?seq=1067>

JOST HERMAND GRADUATE FUND

<http://www.supportuw.org/giving?seq=10349>

You can also find donation links and information at: <https://gns.wisc.edu/donate/>

Send a check made payable to the UW Foundation (indicate "German Department Enhancement Fund," "Undergraduate Excellence Fund (German)," "Netherlandic Studies Fund," or your choice of specific fund) to:

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN FOUNDATION
US Bank Lockbox, P.O. Box 78807
Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807

For questions, please contact Mark Loudon (mllouden@wisc.edu).

For planned giving, please contact Ann Lippincott (608-308-5320) or (ann.lippincott@supportuw.org).



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Why German?

Hear from some of our students on why they study German at UW-Madison!



Rome Rauter ('20) is currently teaching in Linz, Austria as a participant in the US Fulbright Teaching Assistant Program (<https://www.usta-austria.at/>)

Learning German was one of the best decisions I made at the University of Wisconsin. It opened my eyes to a world of language learning, gave me the opportunity to meet great professors, and helped me be competitive in applying for this position to teach in Austria. After starting with German 101 at UW my sophomore year, studying abroad in Vienna, and coming back to get my German certificate, I knew that I wanted German, and by extension language learning, to be a bigger part of my life. Despite COVID-19 and administrative delays I moved to Linz, and I can't thank all my former teachers enough for all their hard work. I would not be here without them! Taking German at UW gave me opportunities I would not have had, and most importantly gave me a new global perspective that I cherish every single day.

UW Madison German Program - Danke für alles!

for more student experiences see page 11