Lincoln College

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

TO THOSE STUDYING GERMAN IN MICHAELMAS 2026

Structure of the Preliminary ('Prelims') Course

General introduction

The German Sub-Faculty has an integrated First Year course in which undergraduates are introduced to the study of literature in historical context and encouraged to make active use of oral and written language skills in discussing historical topics. This lasts three terms and leads to the preliminary examination ('Prelims'). The following gives an overview of the papers. Further details (such as how they are examined) will be provided upon your arrival in Oxford.

German For Beginners Course

The first-year German for Beginners course will consist of four components: three will be focussed on intensive language study, while the fourth will give you an opportunity to work on literature also studied by the post-A level cohort. The course for the three language papers (Papers I, II and III) is centrally organised, and is specific to students of Beginners' German. The course for the literature paper (Paper IV) is organised and taught in Lincoln College in Hilary Term.

1 Language Papers: I, II, III

Books required for the language papers:

- *Kurs DaF A1–B1: Deutsch für Studium und Beruf. Kursbuch mit Audios und Videos inklusive Lizenzschlüssel allango (24 Monate).* Hybride Ausgabe allango. Stuttgart: Klett, ISBN 978-3-12-676844-3.
- *Kurs DaF A1–B1: Deutsch für Studium und Beruf. Übungsbuch mit Audios und Videos.* Stuttgart: Klett, ISBN 978-3-12-676845-0.
- Martin Durrell, Katrin Kohl, Gudrun Loftus and Claudia Kaiser, *Essential German Grammar, second edition* (London: Routledge 2015).
- *Thematischer Basiswortschatz* (Stuttgart: Klett Verlag 2016). ISBN 978-3125195073.

2 Prose and Film Essays

For this paper, you will be taught in college together with students from the other German courses. You will read three narrative works, initially primarily in translation. You will be expected to use the translation consistently in conjunction with the original, maximizing the focus of your reading over time on the original German text. In addition, you will study one film, with subtitles, to learn the techniques of analysing cinematic works.

- Theodor Fontane, *Irrungen, Wirrungen* (1888) [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006) [Suhrkamp BasisBibliothek 81]
  Also: *On Tangled Paths*, trans. by Peter James Bowman (London: Penguin Classics, 2013)
- Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (1912/1915) [Stuttgart: Reclam XL, 2021. ISBN 3150161096]
  Also: *The Metamorphosis*, trans. by Joyce Crick, in The Metamorphosis and Other Stories (Oxford World's Classics; Oxford: OUP, 2009)
- Elfriede Jelinek, *Die Liebhaberinnen* (1975) [Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, current edition. ISBN 978-3499124679]
  Also: *Women as Lovers*, trans. by Martin Chalmers (London: Serpent's Tail, 1994)]

- Fatih Akın (dir.), *Aus dem Nichts* (2017) [DVD: Warner Home Video, 2018]
  Also: *In the Fade*, with English subtitles [DVD: Curzon Artificial Eye, 2018]

Post-A-Level Course

1 The language component: Paper I and II

The language component of the course consists of Paper I and II. Paper I focuses on German society and culture from 1890 to the present, and you will practise reading comprehension and German essay writing. There will be a focus on the following topics: *Generationen und Geschlechter*; *(Aus-)Bildung: wozu?*; *Umwelt*; *Nation und Nationalismus*. Paper I is taught by a German native speaker 'Lektor' or 'Lektorin', and classes are held in German.

Paper II is a translation paper, and you will practise translation into German of a passage from a prose text, and translation from German in a modern literary register. You will receive college-based teaching for both parts of Paper II.

It is important to put in work on consolidating your German grammar and expanding your German vocabulary before you come to Oxford to start your course. For this, you can read and listen to as much German as possible, such as *Deutschlandfunk* (radio available online and as an app) or reading daily newspapers such as *Der Spiegel* or *Die Zeit*. It is important to develop a habit of consolidating your knowledge of the language every day, and by keeping a note of new vocabulary, including the forms of verbs, and, for example, whether they conjugate with *sein* or *haben*.

Make sure you get a good dictionary, e.g. the New Concise Langenscheidt German/English English/German dictionary (recommended; min. 165,000 entries), or the Collins Concise German/English English/German dictionary. Also useful is the Collins German Dictionary (Complete and Unabridged). The College library will have a stock of dictionaries you can use, as does the Taylorian.

For the first-year course, you will need to have Hammer's *German Grammar and Usage*, revised by Martin Durrell, seventh edition (revised) (London, 2021) and *Practising German Grammar – A Workbook* by Martin Durrell, Katrin Kohl and Claudia Kaiser (now in fourth edition).

For vocabulary work, all students need to have a copy of Sarah M. B. Fagan, *Using German Vocabulary* (Cambridge, 2004).

In addition, the Duden *Stilwörterbuch* comes highly recommended (vol. 2 in Duden's 12-volume series of linguistic reference books; this shows words in context and gives standard collocations: ISBN 978-3411040292).

Expanding your German vocabulary
The following books are recommended but not essential to assist you with your learning:

Paul Stocker, *Wort für Wort. New Advanced German Vocabulary*, fifth edition (London, 2010)

And for basic German grammar consolidation, highly recommended:

Annemarie Künzl-Snodgrass and Silke Mentchen, *Upgrade Your German* (London, 2003), also available in a Kindle edition

Annemarie Künzl-Snodgrass and Silke Mentchen, *Speed Up Your German: Strategies to Avoid Common Errors* (London, 2017)

Online dictionaries:

Online dictionaries are useful, but should be used in tandem with a physical dictionary, which often gives greater detail and examples of the usage of a given word or phrase. The following websites are reliable online sources:
www.dict.cc
www.leo.org
https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english-german

2 The course in German Literature: Paper III and IV
The first year of your literature course at Oxford is based on a number of set texts for the First Public Examination ('Prelims'), which takes place at the end of your first year. Throughout the year, you will write essays and commentaries on selected prose texts, dramas, one film, and poems. Papers III and IV are taught in college tutorials, accompanied by lectures on the prescribed texts throughout the year.
Please buy your own copies of the following books and film, and read/watch them prior to starting the course in October (indeed, re-read and re-watch them, if possible). When purchasing them, pay attention to the edition and ISBN, as editions can vary slightly, and having the same page numbers facilitates discussion in tutorials as well as making it easier to follow lectures.

Prescribed texts for the Preliminary Course in German

Paper III: Drama and Poetry: Essay and Commentary

The set dramas for this paper are as follows:

- Frank Wedekind, *Frühlings Erwachen* (1891) [Stuttgart: Reclam, 1991. ISBN 3150079519]
- Bertolt Brecht, *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* (1943) [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2024 (BasisBibliothek 25). ISBN: 978-3-518-18825-5]
- Thomas Bernhard, *Heldenplatz* (1988) [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2023 [1995]. ISBN:3518389742]
- Dea Loher, *Unschuld* (2003) [Stuttgart: Reclam Theater der Gegenwart, 2022. ISBN: 3150142059]

For this paper, you will also study a selection of poems from the anthology *Deutsche Gedichte. 1500 Gedichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, edited by Hans-Joachim Simm (Frankfurt am Main, 2009) ISBN 3458174400.

The list of poems from the anthology set for special study are as follows (with relevant page numbers in brackets):

Der von Kürenberg: Ich zôch mir einen valken (28)
Walther von der Vogelweide: Ich saz ûf eime steine (73)
Wolfram von Eschenbach: Sîne klâwen (85-6)
Fleming: An Sich (232)
Gryphius: Thränen des Vaterlandes (236)
Greiffenberg: Auf meinen bestürmeten Lebens-Lauff (285)
Goethe: Erlkönig (430)
Goethe: Römische Elegien VI (435)
Hölderlin: Hälfte des Lebens (536)
Hölderlin: Andenken (537)
Müller: Der Lindenbaum (603)
Eichendorff: Lockung (622)
Droste-Hülshoff: Die tote Lerche (656)
Heine: Sie saßen und tranken am Teetisch (668)
Heine: Gedächtnisfeier (677)
Mörike: Auf eine Lampe (706)
Meyer: Der römische Brunnen (784)
George: Wir schreiten auf und ab (815)

Hofmannsthal: Ballade des äußeren Lebens (818)
Rilke: Archaïscher Torso Apollos (835)
Rilke: O dieses ist das Tier, das es nicht giebt (842)
Lasker-Schüler: Ein alter Tibetteppich (853)
Stramm: Patrouille (863)
Trakl: Grodek (873)
Benn: Kann keine Trauer sein (948)
Brecht: Schlechte Zeit für Lyrik (995)
Celan: Sprachgitter (1066)
Bachmann: Böhmen liegt am Meer (1075)
Mayröcker: nachdenken über Zeitläufte, (1099)
Kling: falknerei (1314)

Paper IV: Prose and Film: Essays

The prescription for this paper is as follows:

- Theodor Fontane, *Irrungen, Wirrungen* (1888) [Stuttgart: Reclam XL, 2021. ISBN 3150161215]
- Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (1912/1915) [Stuttgart: Reclam XL, 2021. ISBN 3150161096]
- Elfriede Jelinek, *Die Liebhaberinnen* (1975) [Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, current edition. ISBN 978-3499124679]
- Fatih Akın (dir.), *Aus dem Nichts* (2017) [Warner Home Video, 2018]

German Sole Course

If you are taking German as your sole subject you will study some papers in addition to the Post-A-Level Course listed above. Similar to the works from Paper III and IV, it will be beneficial for you to get your own copies and familiarise yourself with the material, especially with texts/ films you will be taught from Michaelmas Term onwards.

Introduction to German Film Studies – Paper IX

This paper is studied in Michaelmas Term of the first year. The course focuses in particular on the cinema of the Weimar Republic. The course will examine the development of film style and film technology in the 1920s and early 1930s, as well as putting the films in the wider context of German culture after the First World War.

There are four set films and the recommended editions:

- *Asphalt* (1929, dir. Joe May). [DVD: Eureka Masters of Cinema No. 7]
- *Menschen am Sonntag* (1930, dir. Robert Siodmak). [DVD: BFI History of the Avantgarde editon]
- *Mädchen in Uniform* (1931, dir. Leontine Sagan). [DVD: Zweitausendeins Edition, available from amazon.de)]
- *Viktor und Viktoria* (1933, dir. Reinhold Schünzel) [DVD: Deutsche Filmklassiker]

Introductory reading:

- David Bordwell, Kristin Thompson and Jeff Smith, *Film Art: An Introduction* (London, 12th edn. 2019) [or any edition from the 6th edn. onwards].
- Sabine Hake, *German National Cinema* (London, 2nd edn. 2007).

Introduction to German Medieval Studies: Paper XII

This paper starts in the second part of Michaelmas Term with a weekly reading class. It will focus on the close study of *Gregorius* by Hartmann von Aue. You will be expected to read the set text

in Middle High German and will be given an introduction to the language.

- Hartmann von Aue, *Gregorius*, [Reclam edition: Middle High German text with a facing page translation in modern German].

Key Texts in German Thought – Paper XIII

This paper is studied in Hilary and Trinity Terms of the first year. The focus will be on close reading of four short texts. While you may consult translations, you are expected to develop a good grasp of the original works.

The texts are:

- Immanuel Kant, Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht [in Kant, *Was ist Aufklärung*? [Hamburg: Meiner, 1999]; NB not the Reclam volume with the same title]
- Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Manifest der kommunistischen Partei* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014) [Reclams Universal-Bibliothek 19266]
- Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Zur Naturgeschichte der Moral', in *Jenseits von Gut und Böse. Vorspiel zu einer Philosophie der Zukunft* [Stuttgart: Reclam, 1988]
- Sigmund Freud, *Zeitgemäßes über Krieg und Tod. Warum Krieg? Der Briefwechsel mit Albert Einstein* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2022) [Reclams Universal-Bibliothek 14276]

Do let me know if you have any questions, and have a lovely summer.

All the best, und bis bald in Oxford.



Dr Sophia Buck