

**Minority Discourse:  
German Literature in Translation**

**GRMN 200W01**

**Time: T/Th 1:00 PM - 2:15 PM**

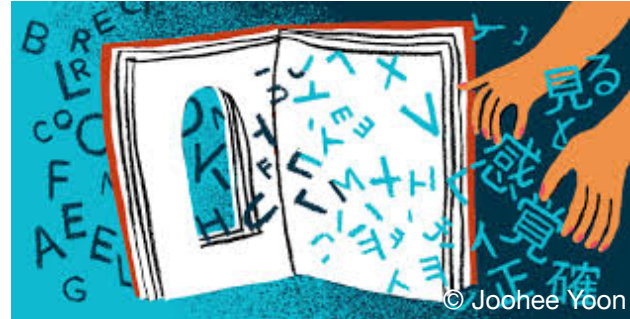
**Place: C. J. 224**

**Professor: Dr. Christiane Fischer**

**Email: cfische1@hamilton.edu**

**Office: C. J. 202A**

**Office hours: Thursday 10:00 AM-12:00 PM, and by appointment.**



Course Summary and Learning Goals:

GRMN 200 is a turning point in your German studies. Its goal is to prepare students for upper-level courses in which grammar is no longer the main focus. It is also an important preparation for study abroad. At the end of the semester, you will be able to: express yourself as an educated student of German, construct rich and nuanced descriptions, as well as manipulate abstract, analytical, and argumentative expression both orally and in writing. GRMN 200 is a writing-intensive course. Students write several analytical papers and participate in oral debates and discussions using clear and concise expressions. To help you acquire good writing and speaking habits, you will be provided with argumentative tools in German which will apply to writing and speaking in other subjects in English. You will engage with fiction, journalistic texts and academic writing in German.

To better reflect on our linguistic existence both in our native and foreign languages, we will explore the fictional works by authors from twenty-first-century Germany who did not write in their native languages. We will examine how, through their fiction, authors engage with classically German literary forms, the German language, notions of “Muttersprache,” “Heimat” and “Herkunft,” generational memory, space, and their own multifaceted identities. Specifically, we will investigate their relationship to monolithic understandings of “German literature” and “Germanness,” as well as their place in German literature and Germany as a whole.

Blackboard Site:

Readings not required for purchase are available on the GRMN 200W01 Blackboard site.

Books for Purchase at the Hamilton Bookstore:

Yoko Tawada: *Überseezunge*

Saša Stanišić: *Herkunft*

Sharon Dodua Otoo: *Herr Gröttrup setzt sich hin. Drei Texte.*



### Course Requirements:

**Readings, Class and TA Participation (25%):** Students are expected to complete the readings for the class period that they are assigned. Class preparations might entail taking detailed notes, looking up words in the dictionary, keeping a personal vocabulary list, and reading the text several times depending on its level of difficulty. While you are expected to contribute with concrete discussion questions, you are not expected to understand everything.

**Text Analysis Presentation (20%):** Each student will prepare and deliver one text analysis presentation during the semester. This assignment requires you to present a close reading of the assigned text or text passages that highlights key literary elements such as language, tone, structure, symbolism, or theme. Your goal is to demonstrate how the passage contributes to the larger work and to facilitate the following discussion with the class. Presentation introductory remarks should be 5–7 minutes long and include a handout or visual aid.

**3 Papers (55%):** Since this is a writing-intensive class, you will write in total three papers (around 1000 words each). You will receive a prompt for the first two assignments, and for the last essay, you are allowed to formulate your thesis statement. Each paper assignment consists of a first version and a revised version. The process of revising, of seeing your work with new eyes and rethinking your response to a question, constitutes the bulk of what scholars and professional writers do. The revisions should provide benefits beyond an improved grade. A successful revision will move beyond “fixing” local errors; a successful revision will present a reframed and refined thesis, amplified evidence, and a more nuanced discussion of its topic than was present in the original. Throughout the semester, you will receive feedback and writing support from me, your peers, and the Writing Center!

### Writing-Intensive:

Hamilton’s WI program is committed to helping students learn how to write clearly and effectively and to grow in their skills over time. This course will contribute to your ability to think critically about your written arguments to convey your ideas concisely and convincingly. We will focus on multiple types of writing within the discipline and on how audience, purpose, and medium impact how we write. In this course, you will write three formal papers and several short informal assignments. Our writing process will include early drafts, feedback on drafts from me, from your peers in class, and writing tutors. Writing-intensive courses require you to receive feedback on drafts in one shape or form for each of the major assignments. Feedback is writing, too, and assessing your peers’ work will help you to become more aware of your own. Sometimes, we will discuss general writing concerns in class, and I will be available to discuss your writing during office hours. Please refer to specific assignments for details such as due dates, expectations for revision, assignment length, etc.



### Office Hours:

I strongly encourage you to visit me during office hours to continue conversations from class, discuss ideas for your papers, address class concerns, or just get something off your chest. Some assignments will require you to visit me during office hours. If you cannot meet with me during my regularly scheduled office hours, write me an e-mail, and we will find a time that works for both of us. I generally check my email between 9 am-6 pm Monday - Friday and sporadically on the weekend. I will get back to you as soon as I can, Monday - Friday.

### Health and Accessibility Resources:

Students with disabilities of any kind who may need accommodations for this course are encouraged to contact Assistant Dean for Accessibility Resources Allen Harrison at [aharriso@hamilton.edu](mailto:aharriso@hamilton.edu). Students experiencing mental or physical health challenges that are significantly affecting their academic work or well-being are encouraged to contact me and/or speak with a dean so we can help you find the right resources. Conversations with students will remain private and confidential unless you permit to disclose information to others.

### Inclusivity:

The Hamilton community embraces diversity of age, background, beliefs, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and other visible and non-visible categories. I welcome all students in this course and expect that all students contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment. If you feel that you are not being welcomed, included, or accepted in this class, please come to me or a college administrator to share your concerns.

### **Course Grading Scale:**

93-100: A  
90-92: A-  
88-89: B+  
83-87: B  
80-82: B-  
78-79: C+  
73-77: C  
70-72: C

### **Final Grades will be weighed as follows:**

25% Preparation, Class and TA Participation  
20% Text Analysis Presentation  
5% Essay 1.1  
10% Essay 1.2  
5% Essay 2.1  
10% Essay 2.2  
10% Essay 3 Presentation  
15% Essay 3 Final Version



### Course Policies:

#### **Use of online dictionaries, translators, and AI tools:**

Learning a language—at any level—means that you will inevitably make mistakes. These mistakes are part of the learning process, and in this class, you will learn how to work around the difficulties you may have so you can avoid making repeated mistakes. When working on homework or compositions, the use of a good dictionary (online or other form) is highly recommended. However, the use of a simple online translator or other artificial intelligence software (Chat GPT or other) is not allowed. Online translators and other AI tools are not to be used for translating or creating entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers. It is very obvious when an online translator has been used as the word order, and word choices are usually wrong. On the other hand, AI tools will produce papers that are written using such advanced vocabulary and grammar structures that it is very clear they were not written by a student in GRMN 200.

Using these tools will take away from the learning process, as you will most likely be unable to reproduce what the online tool has done for you in class, on a test, or in a real-life situation speaking with someone in German. **If a student has used an online translator or AI tool for an entire sentence, paragraph, or paper, they will be reported to the Dean of Students for Academic Dishonesty.**

#### **Honor Code:**

Please refer to the [Honor Code](#). Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported to the Dean of Students.

#### **Late Work:**

1. No late homework will be accepted.
2. Late essays and their rewrites will be lowered by half a grade for each day that they are late within a three-business-day range. For each day it is late, your grade will be lowered by half a letter grade for the first and second drafts. After the third day, the assignment will no longer be accepted.

#### **Classroom:**

Please observe normal rules of courtesy in class and refrain from engaging in disruptive behavior. **Chronic late arrivals, early departures, and/or leaving the classroom in the middle of class will result in the lowering of your participation grade.**

#### **Attendance:**

Language cannot be learned without constant practice and reinforcement. Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. You may miss **three classes** without these absences, affecting your grade. If you have more than **three** unexcused absences, your FINAL grade will be dropped by half a letter grade for every class missed. Example: a B becomes a B-

#### **Special Note on Participation and Attendance:**

Please note that since participation in a foreign language class requires mental availability and physical readiness, eating or checking messages, looking at materials



that are not course-related, etc., all keep you from focusing on class and inhibit your progress. **Cell phones must be turned off during class.**

Date	In Class	Homework Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> 8/28	Introduction Syllabus Discuss Tawada	Tawada, "Von der Muttersprache zur Sprachmutter"
<b>Week 2</b> 9/2	Discuss Tawada	Tawada, <i>Überseetzungen</i> , "Wörter, die in der Asche schlafen"
9/4	Discuss Tawada	Tawada, <i>Überseetzungen</i> , "Ein chinesisches Wörterbuch", "Musik der Buchstaben", "Eine leere Flasche"
<b>Week 3</b> 9/9	Discuss Tawada	Tawada, <i>Überseetzungen</i> , "Portrait einer Zunge"
9/11	Discuss Tawada	Tawada, <i>Überseetzungen</i> , "Portrait einer Zunge" cont.
<b>Week 4</b> 9/16	<b>Writing Center Workshop</b>	<b>Working Thesis:</b> First articulation of the argument you want to make and initial ideas of the evidence you might want to use (150-200 words). Bring your laptop!
9/18	Discuss Kohl and Weinrich	Kohl, "Rede 14. Juni 1983", Weinrich, "Um eine deutsche Literatur von außen bittend"
<b>Week 5</b> 9/23	Discuss Trojanow, Weinrich, Interview	Trojanow, "Migration als Heimat", "Ich bin so deutsch wie Kafka", Weinrich, "Ein Rinnsal, das Fluss und Strom werden wollte" <b>Essay 1.1</b>
9/25	Discuss Sievers	Sievers, "Zwischen Ausgrenzung und kreativem Potenzial"
<b>Week 6</b> 9/30	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 5 - 35, Stanišić, "Wie ihr uns seht"
10/2	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 36 - 65
<b>Week 7</b> 10/7	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 66 - 94
10/9	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 95 - 122
<b>Week 8</b> 10/14	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 123 - 150 <b>Essay 1.2</b>
<b>Week 9</b> 10/21	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 151 - 177



10/23	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 178 - 204
<b>Week 10</b> 10/28	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 205 - 227
10/30	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 228 - 255
<b>Week 11</b> 11/4	Discuss Stanišić	Stanišić, <i>Herkunft</i> , pp. 256 - 298
11/6	<b>Peer Writing Workshop</b>	<b>Working Thesis:</b> First articulation of the argument you want to make and initial ideas of the evidence you might want to use (150-200 words). Bring your laptop!
<b>Week 12</b> 11/11	Discuss Özdamer	Özdamer, "Mutterzunge"
11/13	Discuss Özdamer	Özdamer, "Berlin Stadt der Vögel" <b>Essay 2.1.</b>
<b>Week 13</b> 11/18	Discuss Şenocak	Şenocak, "Meine Sprache—Eure Sprache"
11/20	Discuss Şenocak	Şenocak, "Meine Sprache—Eure Sprache" cont.
<b>Week 14</b> 12/2	Discuss Adelson	Adelson, "Ein Manifest gegen das Dazwischen" <b>Essay 2.2.</b>
12/4	Discuss Otoo, May Ayim (a poem we will read in class)	Sharon Dodua Otoo, "Herr Gröttrup setzt sich hin"
<b>Week 15</b> 12/9	<b>Peer Writing Workshop</b>	<b>Working Thesis:</b> First articulation of the argument you want to make and initial ideas of the evidence you might want to use (150-200 words). Bring your laptop!
12/11	<b>Essay 3 Presentation</b>	<b>Essay 3 Presentation:</b> 5 minutes presenting topic, outline and proposed evidence followed by questions and discussion
TBD		<b>Submit Final Paper!</b>

—Any changes to the syllabus will be communicated to the class in advance!—