Recommendations

B.A. German

To learn more about how you can make the most of your educational experiences within and beyond the classroom contact:

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PARTICIPATE

Community Service

Related course: GERM 401p

Sites/Experiences: Outreach for early language programs (German) at sites like Brennen Elementary School, AC Flora High School, etc.

Other: German majors and minors often take a class that allows them to experience teaching German to elementary school children. We see this as a kind of community service, too: for no monetary remuneration, the German program is helping foster the acquisition of language skills among the youth of Columbia.

Why this is important: If we don’t cultivate language acquisition at an early age, we risk missing the window during which language proficiency develops most easily and rapidly. Multicultural understanding and literacy in a language besides English is increasingly valuable in a rapidly globalizing world. We set children up for future success by exposing them to linguistic diversity at an early age.

Global Learning

Related course: GERM 333; FORL 398 (Special Topic on Preparing for Study Abroad)

Timing for “study abroad”: For minors, Summer of Sophomore or Junior year; for majors, either all of Junior year, or Spring of Junior year. These are ideal times, but others are available.

Destinations: Bamberg, Germany (full year or Spring semester); Wittenberg, Germany (summer); Teaching English in Saxony-Anhalt (summer)

Opportunities: We present all of our programs (Bamberg, Wittenberg, and Teaching English in Saxony-Anhalt) at the Study Abroad Fair; we visit classes to discuss the programs; have pre-departure workshops; integrate cultural information about each area into our 100- and 200-level courses.

Why this is important: Everyone should get a chance to study abroad, but for no-one is it more essential than for a language major. A short intensive summer program can give a boost to your language skills (especially comprehension and speaking ability) and also help you appreciate much more deeply the different cultural contexts of places like Germany and Austria. Spending a semester or a year in Germany at the University of Bamberg means moving out of your linguistic and cultural comfort zone. It can be a challenge, but the rewards can be extraordinary—life-changing even—as you learn to see the world from a different perspective. It is one of the most important experiences of your college education.

Peer Leadership

Student Organization(s): German Club

Why this is important: The German Club organizes cultural and linguistic activities that supplement the coursework of majors and minors in German.
**Internships**

**Recommended sites/work experiences**

Students in German 401p spend class time on Monday afternoon in a local elementary school teaching German to very young children. On Wednesdays the class meets on campus, and theories of teaching are compared with experiences.

**Other**

One of our German professors has an ongoing project with the department of education in the German state of Saxony-Anhalt. This program allows USC students to live with a German family and assist in elementary and middle school English classes for a month in the summer. Many USC students have experienced the second-language classroom via this program, named Teaching English in Saxony-Anhalt. The participants are required to take GERM 401p at USC to have the grounding necessary for the experience. We have had many students get Teaching Fulbrights in Germany upon graduating based primarily on the fact that they had this experience (401p and/or the Teaching English in Saxony-Anhalt Program).

**Why this is important**

Any student who has ever wanted to become a teacher of young children can experience the reality of it in a safe context through our GERM 401p course and the Teaching English in Sachsen-Anhalt program.

**Research**

**Sample research projects or topics**

Nessa Kerr did independent research, directed by Dr. Lara Ducate, that looked into the practice of teaching math to young people in Germany versus the US. She won a Magellan for her project, and wrote an impressive senior thesis on her findings, getting recognition on Discovery Day in the process. This is the kind of independent research project we are keen to foster at the undergraduate level. We regularly have SCHC students write theses with German faculty: in recent years, we have directed theses on such topics as Medicine under the Nazis and Nostalgia for East Germany in German Popular Culture.

**Why this is important**

Research experience, particularly independent research, is a valuable enhancement to classroom experience in undergraduate studies and can increase chances for national scholarships (Hollings, Goldwater, Udall) and successful application to graduate school. It is also instrumental in helping students decide on career paths and directions in graduate school.

**INTEGRATE**

**How to Integrate**

Most of our advanced language classes have individual and group presentations that marry specialized knowledge with advanced aural and oral skills (GERM 316, 416, 411, etc.). Students can apply their in-class knowledge during study abroad and bring their new intercultural understandings to the classroom.
LEAD

Career Opportunities
Teaching; research; translation and interpreting; journalism; international business; foreign service; travel and hospitality fields; international NGOs.

Related graduate programs
MA or PhD in German, MA or PhD in Comparative Literature, MA or PhD in Linguistics; we often have students go onto advanced degrees in history, political science, or psychology; and applications to law and medical schools are often boosted by the BA in German—the historical language of science.

Future career opportunities
Teachers and professors; translators; simultaneous translators; journalists; managers in multi-national corporations; lawyers; politicians and political analysts; diplomats; travel agents; airline administration; administrators in international NGOs.

Other comments on careers
Learning another language helps individuals see one idea from multiple perspectives. Among the benefits of hiring a language major: they are sensitive to nuances, trained to read and analyze difficult material quickly, and most importantly, are not afraid to swim against the tide.

The listed experiences are a sample of options for your major. See the USC Connect experiences database to search for more opportunities.

www.sc.edu/usconnect/participate