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My name is Dr Joanna Neilly, and I am the Tutorial Fellow in German at St Peter's College as well as Lecturer in German for Hertford College.

Congratulations on securing your place at Oxford. You should feel very proud of this achievement, and I hope you're looking forward to starting the course in October. I'm very much looking forward to working with you over the next few years. I will be teaching you for much of your course, and I'm usually also responsible for organising your German teaching overall. For the duration of your first year, however, I will be on research leave, and your tutor will be Ms Alexandra Hertlein. Ms Hertlein will take up her position as Lecturer in German from 1 October 2025; in the meantime please do contact me directly should you have any questions not answered by the below.

I'm writing today to let you know what preparation you should be doing before you arrive. The course at Oxford is intensive, and although I am convinced – after your strong performance at admissions – that you are capable of fulfilling the requirements, it is nonetheless important to make a start on the reading now, so that you are well prepared and can hit the ground running in October. A shopping list detailing all the books you will need is enclosed. Do please make every effort to get the books in the correct editions stated here.

Some of you will be taking German alongside another language or another subject (Joint Schools); some of you will be taking only German (German Sole) and of course some are Beginners. Please refer to the appropriate sections below.

Information for all Non-Beginners (including German Sole)

Your course will involve a range of papers on both language and literature, including translation, essay-writing in German, grammar classes, and lectures and tutorials on the literature and culture papers. The course will be explained fully when you arrive here in October.

The important thing for now is to start reading the plays (Wedekind, Brecht, Bernhard and Loher), and if possible, to make a start on the prose works and film too (Fontane, Kafka, Jelinek and Akın). You will study the plays first of all, in the first term. Don't worry about preparing the poems for now, although you will need a copy of the anthology listed. It is essential that you read the four plays before you arrive. Try your best to read in German; it may feel like slow going at first, and you will need to stop regularly to note down new vocabulary (you should do this in a notebook that you keep especially for this purpose, and commit to learning new vocabulary regularly). As you progress, your reading will get faster, so please persevere! You will be pleased to find that your reading fluency in German will



increase relatively quickly if you put in the work at this early stage. You should also write a one-page summary of each of the texts, which you will be able to revise later in the year.

Students of German Sole (i.e. those who are studying only German with no other language or subject) should also watch and take notes on the four additional films listed, which will be studied in the first term. Please see the note below, however, about sourcing the films: if needs be, you can watch them when you get to Oxford. You are not expected to buy your own copies of the films, but I have listed them here if you want to do so. There are also papers on a medieval text and on German Thought (the books are in the reading list).

Information for Beginners

You will not study any literature in your first term. This term will be spent doing an intensive language course, for which I have listed the course books below. Additionally, you will attend a pre-sessional course, and you will receive separate communication about this with all the necessary details from the Senior Language Instructor, Ms Claudia Kaiser.

In your second term, you will continue with the intensive language course and will also begin studying literature and a film in college. I have listed below the books and film you will need, as well as the recommended English translations. You can start by reading in translation but should aim, as the year progresses, to read in German, with the English translation being used as a support rather than your primary resource. It is a good idea to start reading these texts now: some of them are long, and you will need to write summaries of the plots as well as noting down interesting details.

Above all, you should continue to read whatever you like best in English as well as in German. Reading for pleasure is, I hope, one of the reasons you applied to this course, and I wouldn't want you to lose any of that pleasure even as I send what may look like a daunting programme of summer work. Moreover, the best translators (and you will all become very good translators!) are keen readers. On my own to-read list this summer for spare moments: some American noir fiction by Dorothy B. Hughes.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me: joanna.neilly@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk. In the meantime, I hope you have a good summer and I look forward to seeing you in October.

Best wishes,

Dr Joanna Neilly, Associate Professor in German
Fellow and Tutor in German, St Peter's College
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Shopping list

While works of secondary criticism can be borrowed from the College and Faculty libraries, you will need to buy copies of the primary texts. These can often be obtained relatively cheaply on Amazon/Abe Books. Blackwell's is an excellent book shop and will also stock many of the texts you need. Please make sure to get the editions listed below.

NB. Students accepted for German Sole and for Beginners German should see the appropriate sections further down this document.

Non-Beginners

Literature

The texts and film you will need for 2025-26 are:

Deutsche Gedichte. 1500 Gedichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart, edited by Hans-Joachim Simm (Insel, 2009) ISBN 3458174400.

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]

Theodor Fontane, *Irrungen, Wirrungen* (1888) [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006] [Suhrkamp BasisBibliothek 81]

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].

Language



Martin Durrell, *Hammer's German Grammar and Usage* (7th edition; Routledge)

Martin Durrell, Katrin Kohl, Claudia Kaiser, *Practising German Grammar* (4th edition; Routledge)

German Sole only (Joint Schools, Beginners, and Double Linguists can ignore this section)

You will need the books and film listed in the sections 'Literature' and 'Language' above. In addition, you will need:

Medieval Text

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

Key Texts in German Thought

Sigmund Freud, *Zeitgemäßes über Krieg und Tod. Warum Krieg? Der Briefwechsel mit Albert Einstein* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2022) [Reclams Universal-Bibliothek 14276]

Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Manifest der kommunistischen Partei* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014) [Reclams Universal-Bibliothek 19266]

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**]

Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Zur Naturgeschichte der Moral', in *Jenseits von Gut und Böse. Vorspiel zu einer Philosophie der Zukunft* [Stuttgart: Reclam, 1988]

You will also study the following films on the German Sole course, but you do not need your own copies as there will be screenings when you get here:

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, ASIN: B0076JXB68 (Available from amazon.de)

Viktor und Viktoria (1933, dir. Reinhold Schünzel) DVD: Deutsche Filmklassiker



Beginners German

You can ignore the above reading lists. The following books are required for the Beginners language course:

Hueber Verlag (ed.) (2019) *Akademie Deutsch A1+: Intensivlehrwerk mit Audios online*. Ismaning: Hueber. ISBN 978-3-19-101650-0.

Hueber Verlag (ed.) (2020) *Akademie Deutsch A1+: Zusatzmaterial mit Audios online*. Ismaning: Hueber. ISBN 978-3-19-111650-7.

Hueber Verlag (ed.) (2020) *Akademie Deutsch A2+: Intensivlehrwerk mit Audios online*. Ismaning: Hueber. ISBN 978-3-19-121650-4. – **not immediately necessary, so if you wish to spread the costs this one can wait**

Hueber Verlag (ed.) (2020) *Akademie Deutsch A2+: Zusatzmaterial mit Audios online*. Ismaning: Hueber. ISBN 978-3-19-131650-1. – **not immediately necessary, so if you wish to spread the costs this one can wait**

Martin Durrell, Katrin Kohl, Gudrun Loftus and Claudia Kaiser, *Essential German Grammar*, second edition (London: Routledge 2015). [Please note that you will need this edition.]

Thematischer Basiswortschatz, Klett Verlag 2016. ISBN 978-3125195073.

The following books are required for the literature course, and there is also one film. Please note that while you will start off with the English translations, you will be encouraged through the year to refer to the original German and to quote from it in essays. The aim is to be able to read as much as possible in the original by the end of the first year.

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)]



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Fatih Akın (dir.), *Aus dem Nichts* (2017) [DVD: Warner Home Video, 2018] Also: *In the Fade*, with English subtitles [DVD: Curzon Artificial Eye, 2018] The film is also available for download on Apple TV (£6.99).