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 seeing you again, and to working with you over the next four years. I will be teaching you for much of your course, particularly in your first year, and I’m also responsible for organising your German teaching in the cases where I don’t teach it myself: in short, I should be your first point of contact for all things German.

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 excellent 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. Otherwise it will be difficult to stay on top of things. A shopping list detailing all the books you will need is enclosed.

**Information for Non-Beginners**

The important thing for now is to start reading the plays (Wedekind, Schnitzler, and Brecht), to watch the film (M), and if possible, to make a start on the prose works too (Fontane, Mann, Kafka, Keun). Don’t worry about the poems for now, although you will need a copy of the anthology listed. We will study the plays and film in the first term, and the prose works after Christmas. As some of the prose works are rather long, however, it is a good idea to make a start on them soon so that you can spend the Christmas vacation re-familiarising yourself with them. It is essential that you read the three 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 hard work at this early stage. It is also a good idea to write a one-page summary of each of the texts which you will be able to revise later in the year. Additionally, you should read Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House / Nora oder Ein Puppenheim* (1879) in English or German, which will help you to understand the literary context of the German course.

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.

**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 which begins one week before term, and you will receive separate communication about this with all the necessary details.

In your second term, you will continue with the intensive language course and will also begin studying literature in college. I have listed below the books you will need, as well as the recommended English translations. You can start by reading Fontane, Kafka, Mann, and
Keun 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: they are long and you will need to write summaries of the plots as well as noting down interesting details.

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
Fellow and Tutor in German, St Peter’s College
Lecturer in German, Hertford College

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. 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. |

Literature

The texts and film you will need for 2018-19 are:

- Theodor Fontane, *Effi Briest* (1894/95) [Reclam]
- Thomas Mann, *Der kleine Herr Friedemann* (1897) [in Frühe Erzählungen 1893-1912 (Fischer)]
- Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (1912/1915) [Reclam]
- Irmgard Keun, *Nach Mitternacht* (1937) [List Taschenbuch]
- Frank Wedekind, *Frühlings Erwachen* (1891) [Reclam]
- Arthur Schnitzler, *Liebelei* (1894) [Reclam]
- Brecht, *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (1930) [Suhrkamp BasisBibliothek]
In addition, students are expected to read Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House / Nora oder Ein Puppenheim* (1879) in English or German before they arrive in October.

Language

Martin Durrell, *Hammer’s German Grammar and Usage* is essential.

**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:

**Films:**


NB. I understand that costs can add up. I will make sure that the college library has copies of these films, so that you can borrow them and watch them when you arrive, if it has been difficult to source your own copies for any reason. If you need to budget, please prioritise buying the books listed above in the Literature and Language sections, and the texts in the sections below. There will be screenings of these films in the first term, and you can also re-watch them if you borrow from the library.

**Medieval text:**


**Key Texts in German Thought:**

- 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**
- Marx und Engels, *Das kommunistische Manifest* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1999)
Beginners German

The following books are required for the language course:

- DaF kompakt A1 - B1, Birgit Braun, Margit Doubek et. al. Kursbuch + 3 Audio-CDs A1 - B1 978-3-12-676180-2
- DaF kompakt A1 - B1, Birgit Braun, Margit Doubek et. al., Übungsbuch + 2 Audio-CDs A1 - B1 978-3-12-676181-9

The following books are required for the literature course. 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, Effi Briest (1894/95) [Reclam] Also: Effi Briest, translated by Helen Chambers (Penguin Classics, 2000)
- Thomas Mann, Der kleine Herr Friedemann (1897) [in Frühe Erzählungen 1893-1912 (Fischer)] Also: Little Herr Friedemann, translated by David Luke, in Death in Venice and Other Stories, Vintage Mann (Vintage, 1998)
- Irmgard Keun, Nach Mitternacht (1937) [List Taschenbuch] Also: After Midnight, translated by Anthea Bell (Neversink, 2011), currently available only on Kindle