CAL Launches New 4-Year German PhD

The College of Arts & Letters at Michigan State University now offers an innovative, digital-humanities-focused, four-year PhD in German Studies.

The PhD in German Studies at Michigan State University offers students a solid grounding in the study of literature, culture, and language in a uniquely streamlined program that integrates digital humanities approaches into coursework, teaching, and research opportunities. The program is designed to allow students with a BA to complete a four-year PhD, shortening the typical six- to eight-year path.

Traditional seminars are complemented by independent work on non-credit modules (workshops, colloquia, and self-paced assignments) to provide core components of professional expertise. Progress toward the PhD is accelerated through an intensive 12-month model that fully utilizes summer semesters. Preparation for comprehensive exams and the dissertation is integrated into coursework and modules beginning with the first semester of study.

TECHNOLOGY PLAYS CENTRAL ROLE

The MSU German Studies program acknowledges the central role that changing technologies play in all of our lives. The faculty at MSU integrate insights from their expertise in the areas of digital humanities, instructional technology, computer-mediated language learning, global cultural studies, and film/media studies into their teaching and research. Students in the PhD program work with new technologies in and out of the classroom, and consider the influence of media on language, culture and society in all of their seminars. Seminar offerings encompass literature, film and cultural studies from the 18th century to the present, German linguistics, and second language acquisition.
In addition to Digital Humanities, faculty and students collaborate with innovative programs across campus: Global Studies, Second Language Studies, Jewish Studies, Philosophy, Gender Studies, Religious Studies, and Peace and Justice Studies. Students in the PhD program work with new technologies in and out of the classroom, and consider the influence of media on language, culture and society in all of their seminars.

PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CAREERS

The College of Arts and Letters’ innovative program fosters breadth and depth of knowledge, intellectual skills, mental flexibility and ethical grounding, preparing students to play responsible roles in society while launching successful careers inside academia as well as in the public and private sectors. Coursework is combined with learning and teaching opportunities beyond the classroom, including virtual research experiences, study abroad internships, job shadowing in upper-level classes, engagement in MSU’s Community Language School, and other outreach programs.

Transcriptable graduate certification programs are available in Digital Humanities; College Foreign Language Teaching with an emphasis on educational technology, and Film, Media, and Transmedia Studies (expected 2013); and on language, culture and society in all of their seminars.

PhD students receive 4-year funding packages that include a combination of teaching assistantship, Max Kade Fellowship, and summer grants for teaching, collaborative research, and study abroad or other internship experiences.

“What is most impressive about the graduate program is the willingness to continually examine the market conditions for PhDs and to make robust and productive changes accordingly...the program has long integrated language literature and culture coupled with strong pedagogy skills and most recently instituted a strong interdisciplinary link with Digital Humanities and with Educational Technology.”

– Karin Wurst, PhD
Dean, College of Arts & Letters

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