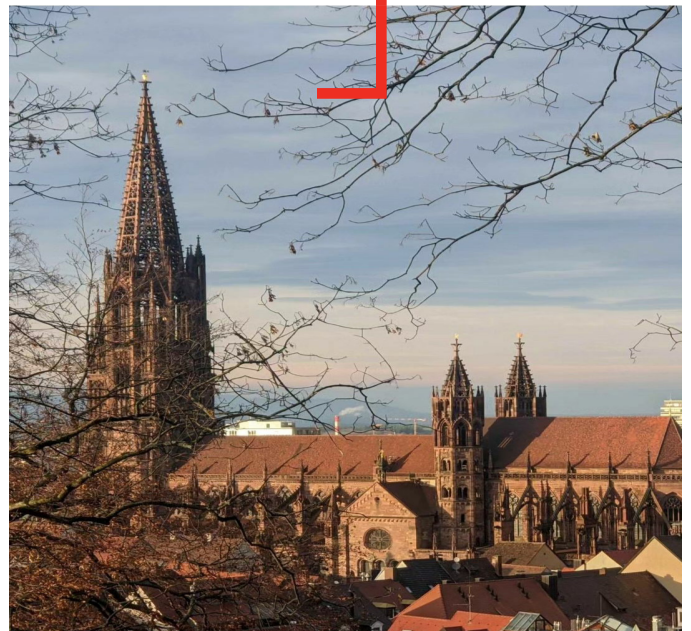




DEPARTMENT OF  
GERMANIC LANGUAGES  
AND LITERATURES

NEWSLETTER  
WINTER 2025



[lsa.umich.edu/german](https://lsa.umich.edu/german)

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



## Dear friends,

Looking back, my first term as Chair this past fall unfolded like a kaleidoscope, with each day and week

bringing new colors, constellations, and challenges. Stepping into the new role has afforded me fresh perspectives and renewed appreciation of our department's faculty, students, and staff. Their collective commitment to the teaching and research of German, Dutch, and Swedish/Scandinavian languages, cultures, societies, and histories remains unmatched. I've been touched by how deeply faculty and staff care about the well-being of our students and how much invisible labor goes into ensuring the smooth running of the department's everyday affairs.

Building on this strong foundation, we remained quite busy. In fact, there was something of a theme that emerged from the steady stream of events, accolades, and publications that saw the light of day last semester: the theme of translation.

Just as classes began in the fall, we received the exciting news that Jon Cho-Polizzi had won the Helen & Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize for his intricate English rendering of Max Czollek's *De-Integrate: A Jewish Survival Guide for the 21st Century* (Restless Publishing, 2023).

Only a few days later, this year's Max Kade Writer-in-Residence, Zafer Şenocak, arrived on campus and brought along his newest poetry publication, *First Light*

(Zephyr Press, 2024). The celebrated poet, essayist, and novelist is equally at home speaking in German and Turkish. In *First Light* Zafer's Turkish poems appear concurrently with Kristin Dickinson's renderings into English. Together, Zafer and Kristin presented a series of bilingual readings of *First Light*, delighting audiences at Literati in Ann Arbor, Book Suey in Hamtramck, and the closing event of our first post-COVID-19 graduate conference, De/Limiting Translation.

At that invigorating, two-day event, architectural historian Esra Akcan delivered a compelling keynote inviting us to extend the notion of translation beyond language to visual fields and into the global circulation of culture. Representing the vitality and future of our field, student papers followed this call and explored translation as it relates to memory, the body, media, creativity, and yes, also to AI. (The challenges AI poses to our practice as teachers and scholars are, of course, not limited to translation alone but rather expand into everything we do as teachers and scholars).

Translating experiences across time and geographies, this year's Signe Karlström speaker, Maria Bouroncle, introduced us to her acclaimed trilogy of historical novels about Swedish-American migration, gender, and everyday life in a Swedish village. We are eager to hear and learn more from Maria when she returns in Winter 2026 as writer in residence of the Scandinavian program.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to highlight the research acumen of one of our emeritus faculty, Hermann Weiss. As you will learn in more detail

in the following pages, Hermann's sensational discovery of five new letters by Hermann von Kleist is considered a historical breakthrough in Kleist research and was widely reported in the press in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. With rapt attention and considerable pride, we listened to Hermann in November as he presented his findings and engaged in a conversation about its relevance with Andreas Gailus and Helmut Puff. Together with students, friends, and colleagues, we raised a glass in his honor.

I look forward to reconnecting with you in the new year and to continuing the work with our fabulous students, faculty, and staff. Please stay in touch and stop by if your paths lead you through Ann Arbor.

Warmest regards,

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# HIGHLIGHTS

## Turkish German Poet, Zafer Şenocak, Visits the Department

Kristin Dickinson, Associate Professor of German Studies



This Fall, Turkish German poet, novelist, and public intellectual Zafer Şenocak joined the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures as a Max Kade Writer-in-Residence. During his three months in Ann Arbor, Zafer visited undergraduate classes, ran a graduate student seminar, and gave several public readings. Whether working from his office with the door open or chatting with department members at our weekly Kaffee und Kuchen gatherings, Zafer served as an ever-engaging presence in the department.

To celebrate the publication of *First Light* (2024)—a collection of Zafer's Turkish-language poetry translated into English by Professor Kristin Dickinson—Zafer and

Kristin held multiple public readings during his residency. During their first bilingual reading at Literati, an engaged and attentive audience made for a truly energizing evening. Later in the term, Zafer and Kristin read alongside local author of Iraqi Chaldean descent, Dunya Mikhail, at Book Suey in Hamtramck. Here themes of home, exile, and transhistorical belonging took shape across the languages of Arabic, Turkish, and English. In November, Zafer gave readings in both German and Turkish at our graduate student-organized conference, De/Limiting Translation, including excerpts from his forthcoming volume of experimental essays, *Vom Balkon*. Zafer gave additional readings at the University of British Columbia and the University of Wisconsin, Madison.



In the latter half of the semester, Zafer led an innovative graduate seminar focused on organizing and refining approximately 60 of his previously unstructured poems. Together, seminar participants read and discussed these poems, while also helping Zafer craft titles and organize the collection. Graduate student Laura Stahl described the seminar as a refreshing and engaging experience, highlighting Zafer's openness and willingness to discuss his writing so candidly. Kehinde Sowunmi shared that the seminar reshaped her perspective on poetry, seeing it as both a 'living archive' and an 'embodiment of interconnected histories.' Emphasizing the often unseen yet crucial role of

the editing process, Kelsi Morefield noted how each participant formed a personal connection to the poems. Reflecting on the experience, Zafer called working with the students a 'gift,' appreciating the many ways they contributed to shaping and refining his collection, which they collaboratively titled *Ausreisen*.



Before departing Ann Arbor for Istanbul on December 7, Zafer left behind a beautifully crafted chapbook edition of *Ausreisen*. Handsewn by our talented graduate students, the chapbook also features cover art and a title page designed by Zafer himself. Be sure to stop by the departmental common room to take a look!

# FACULTY FOCUS

## I've Always Been Something of a Detective

Kerstin Barndt, Chair, Associate Professor

When Hermann Weiss retired in 2002, after some 35 years as an active member of the German faculty at the University of Michigan, he hardly hung up his hat. Instead, his research continued unabated—but he made a shift from literature to history. Having completed a respected career as a literary scholar, he embarked on a project on forced Jewish labor under National Socialism. He published his last article on literary scholarship in 2003, but when it came time to organize his papers and pass them along to collections in Germany for future generations of scholars, his curiosity got the better of him. He returned to a question that had been nagging him since the 1980s, when he had come across references to the papers of a certain Joseph Buol-Berenberg (1773-1812): if those papers existed, might they also contain materials by Berenberg's far more famous friend, the great German author and playwright Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811)?



©Nick Hagen

And so, no longer able to travel great distances, Hermann began exploring this possibility in earnest by email and telephone from his home in Dexter. In 2022, he located the Berenberg papers in the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck (Austria) and engaged the local archivist in a daunting search through 289 unrecorded boxes. His persistence, and the archivist's patience, paid off in spades: earlier this year, to enormous fanfare and international media attention, Hermann Weiss was able to announce the sensational discovery of not one, but five new letters by Heinrich von Kleist, written between 1809 and 1810. The last such discovery dated back to 1914, this was nothing short of a once-in-a-century scholarly feat.

This feat is now documented in the current *Kleist-Jahrbuch*, the yearbook of the Heinrich von Kleist Association, where Hermann presents and contextualizes the letters. These letters were written in a war-torn Europe, in which Kleist fervently wishes to see the defeat of Napoleon. They help us understand the beginnings of European nationalism. And they add nuance to the image of one of the most complex figures in the history of German literature.

Hermann Weiss's find beautifully encapsulates his career as a scholar of 18th-century literature, and as a "literaturhistorischer Detektiv," as he himself puts it: "I've always been something of a detective," he averred in an extensive interview about his find in the German journal *Forschung und Lehre*. Seeking constantly to broaden and deepen our understanding of Heinrich von Kleist, his writings, and his life, Hermann has followed literary and political networks, tracts, cues, and commitments. Thanks to Hermann's scholarship, Kleist is back at the center of literary discourse and public culture in the German-speaking world: over 400 newspapers in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland have reported about the find, with the prestigious weekly *Die Zeit* garnering the privilege to break the story. In August, the paper sent its reporter, Anna-Lena Scholz, to interview Hermann at his home in Dexter and environs. Her article represents a beautiful tribute to Hermann and his work, conveying in detail the gratifying—but also taxing—dimensions involved in the discovery, the deciphering, the editing of the letters, and the ensuing process of careful historical contextualization. For this work, we extend our thanks and congratulations to Hermann Weiss, on behalf of generations of future scholars, and the University of Michigan – with more than a little pride in our erstwhile colleague mixed in.



# FACULTY FOCUS

## Detroit's Olympic Uprising: A Documentary

Silke Weineck, Associate Chair, Professor, German Studies and Comparative Literature

Very few people know that Detroit bid for the Summer Olympics at least nine times—no city in history has lost more bids. But 1963 was the most ambitious one of them all. Mayor Jerome Cavanagh pulled out all the stops. They had John F. Kennedy record a video in support. George Romney, governor of Michigan (and Mitt's moderate father), was all in. But the city's white elite neglected to persuade much of Black Detroit that America's most segregated city was worthy to host an event dedicated to universal brotherhood—and they staged a dramatic protest at what was meant to be the crowning event of the bid: a torch relay from Los Angeles, the last city to host the Games, to Detroit.

Sports economist Stefan Szymanski and I told this complex story of a city whose mayor did not yet realize the depth of a crisis that had been brewing for decades and would soon erupt catastrophically. And we told it in documentary form—a brand new genre to both of us.

The most rewarding part of making the documentary was meeting some of the surviving participants in the torch relay protest, Professors Luke Tripp and Charles Simmons, along with their fellow Detroiter Herb Boyd, a writer, historian, and journalist. They're all in their 80s, sharp as a tack, very funny, and as knowledgeable as they are passionate. We even found Hayes Jones, the torchbearer himself. We talked to Julie Matthaei, granddaughter of Fred Matthaei Sr., who was the driving force behind Detroit's decades-long quest. We interviewed Judge Mark Cavanagh, Jerome Cavanagh's son; David Goldberg, a historian of 1960s Detroit who teaches at Wayne State, and Heather Dichter, a UK-based Olympic historian.

Premiering the documentary at the Detroit Center to an audience that included Luke Tripp's extended family, a large delegation from the General Baker Institute, and many friends and friendly strangers was one of the most rewarding experiences of my professional life—the fact that it ended up as the most-watched streaming video on WJBK, the local Detroit TV station, for several months was just icing on the cake.

## Jon Cho-Polizzi Receives Translation Award

Jon Cho-Polizzi, Assistant Professor of German Studies



Assistant Professor Dr. Jon Cho-Polizzi was awarded the 2024 Helen and Kurt Wolff Prize for his translation of Max Czollek's *De-Integrate: A Jewish Survival Guide for the 21st Century* (Restless Books, 2023).

In the words of the prize jury:

*"Cho-Polizzi's crackling, punchy language brilliantly takes up the challenge of the book's many shifts in register (theoretical, academic, critical, colloquial), tone (sardonic and humorous to reflective and personal), and form (poetry, rap lyrics, newspaper/journal articles, speeches, statements). His buoyant prose, which manages to read both effortlessly and invitingly, captures the flavor of the original as it conveys issues of urgent current interest. His sparkling presentation extends even to the translator's footnotes. Max Czollek's book, in Jon Cho-Polizzi's resplendent translation, is sure to linger in readers' minds for a long time to come."*

# GRADUATE STUDENT FOCUS

## A Chat with Professor Mary Hennessy

Johannes von Moltke, Rudolf Arnheim Collegiate Professor of German Studies and Film, Media & Television

**Mary Hennessy** earned her Ph.D. in the German Department in 2021 with a dissertation entitled *Handmaidens of Modernity: Gender, Labor, and Media in Weimar Germany*. After a subsequent postdoctoral fellowship in Berlin and a year teaching in the German Department at the University of California, Berkeley, Mary is now an Assistant Professor in the Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Johannes von Moltke reconnected with her over Zoom to hear how things have been going.

**Johannes von Moltke (JvM):**  
*Mary, how was your first year as an assistant professor?*

**Mary Hennessy (MH):** It was great. I learned a lot about the program I joined, taught intermediate language courses, introduced some new courses, and got to know some really nice colleagues. Madison is a lovely place to be, though I was very busy, attending numerous conferences—possibly overdoing it a bit in my first year. I was lucky to be hired concurrently with Zach Fitzpatrick, who also works on cinema. We developed a new lower-division course in English, which we plan to take turns teaching.

**JvM: Was there anything that particularly surprised you about moving from Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Madison, Wisconsin?**

**MH:** I thought Madison and Ann Arbor would be more similar. Madison is bigger, which has its perks. Both have quite similar institutions, though. One difference here is the frequent reference to the State Legislature, whereas at U-M we would have focused more on the role of the regents. Right down the road from the University, Madison's legislature is literally closer, causing more anxiety due to the legacy of the Scott Walker years. But even recently, they held a pay raise hostage over DEI concerns, underscoring how tense the relationship remains.

**JvM: If you have time for research, where is it taking you?**

**MH:** I followed up on an idea from my dissertation, writing an article on the 1943 Nazi-era film *Großstadtmelodie* (Melody of the Metropolis), which focuses on the film's self-reflexive but ambiguous representation of gender, labor, and photography. I'm excited to share that the article will be published in the *German Studies Review* soon. I'm also working on an essay on intersectionality in feminist film theory, and on my monograph, expanding its scope from where I left off in the dissertation. Right now, I'm calling it "Vanishing Mediators" for the way that women's media work is central to the functioning of culture but then disappears from view once the film is edited, the phone line connected, the manuscript typed up by the female secretary. But the title might still change. I'm also thinking that for future research, I might delve into post-war cinema,

particularly the films of Helke Sander. Why is there no monograph on this pioneering female filmmaker, compared to a seemingly endless string of books on figures like Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Wim Wenders, or Werner Herzog?

**JvM: Reflecting on your academic journey, do you find any skills or resources from your time at U-M particularly useful now?**

**MH:** I did find that graduate school really prepared me for research, teaching, and service, albeit on a different scale. U-M's close faculty-graduate student relationships have also given me a model for mentoring. I feel like my pedagogical training equipped me well to teach in both German and English. That said, the scale is so different. I don't know anymore why I ever thought I was busy as a grad student...

**JvM: Well, it sounds like I should let you get back to work. Thanks for chatting!**





# GRADUATE STUDENT FOCUS

## 2024 Graduate Conference Afterglow

Congratulations to the graduate students for a successful 2024 Graduate Student Conference, the first held in-person graduate conference since COVID!

### By the numbers

- One invited keynote
- Four graduate student research panels
- Twelve graduate student presenters
- Four faculty respondents and 4 grad student moderators
- One tri-lingual (German, Turkish, and English) poetry reading
- Attendance ranged from 20 to over 30 participants



## Congratulations, Dr. Tina Tahir!

Congratulations to Tina Tahir on the very successful defense of her probing and truly interdisciplinary dissertation *Die Kehrseite der Bilder: The Multi-layered Memory Image in Gerhard Richter's Early Works and W. G. Sebald's Austerlitz*. Her committee, co-chaired by Helmut Puff and Kerstin Barndt with Julia Hell, Johannes von Moltke, and James Elkins was impressed by the incisive dialogue Tina unfolded between Richter's and Sebald's artistic practices and visual aesthetics.



## Welcome New Students!



**Nathan Bailey** graduated magna cum laude from Southern Illinois University Carbondale with a BA in Languages, Cultures, and International Studies, specializing in German. His research interests include critical theory, Marxism, phenomenology, psychoanalytic film theory, and representations of the human body in media under fascism.



**Kehinde Sowunmi** comes to the program from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria by way of the Department of Modern Languages, Florida State University with interests in German African Migration and Diasporic studies, Minority studies, cultural memory and integration, German-Jewish post-war collective memory, and narrative elements.

# DUTCH STUDIES

Annemarie Toebosch, Teaching Professor and Director of Dutch Studies

## Honoring Irene Butter

On June 20, 2024, Holocaust survivor and U-M professor emerita, Dr. Irene Butter, received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit, the highest civilian honor of the Federal Republic of Germany. In an emotional ceremony, Ambassador Andreas Michaelis presented the Cross at his Washington, D.C., residence, recognizing Dr. Butter's dedication to Holocaust education and reconciliation.

In her acceptance speech, Dr. Butter spoke out against occupation, hatred, and inequality, as she quipped, "I hope to speak out for forty more years." Honoring her father, John Hasenberg, she acknowledged the Iron Cross he received for his World War I service by the same country that would kill him twenty-five years later. She accepted the Bundesverdienstkreuz as an act of reconciliation seventy-nine years to the day after her family was deported to Nazi camps.

It was a true honor to be present at the ceremony and share moments with Irene's family and friends, including friends of the Dutch program: Irene's "sisters" from Zeitouna, the Jewish and Palestinian gialogue group she co-founded twenty-two years ago. After forty-five years of dedication to our program, Irene was back in the Anne Frank course the day before the U.S. elections, warning against authoritarianism and spreading solidarity. This past year, her classroom visits have provided hope to students distressed and confused about the Middle East, who express that Irene inspires them to "bring out the humanity in others," "find the power to listen with open minds," and "treat everyone with kindness." Dutch Studies is grateful to Irene beyond words and, with her, looks forward to forty more years of her wisdom.



## Moedertaal (Mother Tongue)



Mitchell Voit (left in the photo) and Zachary Geyer (right in the photo) have both found a sense of belonging in our decolonial program. Zach made his decision to take Dutch while visiting family in South Africa, choosing a language similar to Afrikaans. He can now communicate with his mother: "It has made our relationship stronger and it has been fun for both of us to communicate in the language she grew up with."

Mitch chose Dutch to connect with Suriname. His choice makes him the first Surinamese American student in the first Surinamese Dutch curriculum in the U.S.: "My mother is proud of me for my efforts to learn her language [...] it allows me to connect more meaningfully with her and with my family in Suriname[...]. Learning Dutch has also piqued my interest in Sranan Tongo, the communication language of my family in Suriname, motivating me to ask my grandfather to teach me."

Both students describe how our curriculum has developed their identity. For Mitch, "In third-year Surinamese Dutch, especially, I have discovered I am Creole and White. Appreciating the traditions my mother has taught me. Now, I have started to cook my mom's dishes." For Zach, "Being able to understand and speak the language of my relatives helps me connect with my roots, making me feel more South African." In class, Zach learned about Afrikaans and its Khoisan origins, helping him understand the significance of his mother's anti-Apartheid activism.



# SCANDINAVIAN STUDIES

Johanna Eriksson, Collegiate Lecturer, Teaching Professor and Director of Scandinavian Studies

## Good Things Come From Raoul Wallenberg Medal Ceremony

In September, Nigerian environmental activist, photographer, and poet Nnimmo Bassey received the University of Michigan Raoul Wallenberg Medal. During the Medal and Lecture Ceremony, the Swedish ambassador to the U.S., Urban Ahlin, spoke about the life and legacy of U-M alumnus Raoul Wallenberg, who saved tens of thousands of lives during the Holocaust. The day following the ceremony, Swedish language students were invited for breakfast and a conversation with the ambassador. Among other things, Ahlin provided updates on the Swedish-American green transition and discussed jobs created by Swedish businesses across the U.S.

## Signe Karlström Lecture Series Welcomes Swedish Author Maria Bouroncle

In November, we held the second Signe Karlström Lecture this calendar year, featuring Swedish author Maria Bouroncle. With an extensive career in international development, Maria has worked for the UN, the Nordic Development Fund, and the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C. for more than 25 years. She is now a full-time author, having published three novels.

Her first novel, *It Came To Me on a Whim* (2018), is based on a tragic event in her family. In the 1920s, a young woman named Ingeborg, possibly suffering from postpartum depression, tragically killed her three young children. At Maria's book release party for her first novel, a woman named Hilja introduced herself. Hilja lived with Ingeborg's ex-husband's family as a war child from Finland. During World War II, 70,000 Finnish children were sent to Sweden for safety. Like many Finnish-speaking children, Hilja and her brother Antti found it difficult to adjust. While they were supposed to return home to Finland after the war, several thousand, including Hilja and Antti, ultimately came back to Sweden, caught between two countries. Hilja's story inspired Maria's second novel, *The Girl with a Name Tag* (2022).



L to R: Maria Bouroncle, Bodil Söderberg and Johanna Eriksson

Maria also visited the Introduction to Scandinavian Civilization class, along with Bodil Söderberg, who, like Hilja was moved to Sweden from Finland. Unlike Hilja, Bodil was Swedish-speaking and has positive memories of that time in her life. Bodil, who resides in Michigan now, is an appreciated regular guest in the class.

At the Signe Karlström Lecture, Maria focused on her latest novel, *Chicago Dreams* (2024), about Elsa, who emigrated to Chicago in the 1920s, a time when Chicago was the second-largest "Swedish city" in the world, and 25% of the maids in Chicago were Swedish women.

## Scandinavian Club Activities

The Scandinavian Club, led by Max Hafner and Chloe Mitchell, has had a vibrant fall season with weekly fika, soccer, kubb, plogging, and movie and board game nights. A meeting with U-M's Residential College Head of Music, Katri Ervamaa, inspired a tango workshop, featuring live tango music by Katri and her chamber music students, and passionate dance instruction by Argentinian tango dancer Jorge Broggio and his dance partners. The Keene Theater was packed with students eager to try their dance moves. Tango was introduced to Finland in the 1920s and has remained a popular part of Finnish culture ever since.

## Swedish Women's Educational Association (SWEA) Michigan's Annual Christmas Fair

SWEA Michigan held its 32nd annual Christmas Fair, attracting approximately 500 people who came to enjoy Swedish traditions, food, and crafts at this cozy and festive event. An enthusiastic group of U-M Swedish language students participated in the Swedish School's Lucia pageant. Funds raised at the fair support Swedish organizations, including the Scandinavian Program.

# STAYING CONNECTED

## U-M Alum Accepted to 2024-2025 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange

From [Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Press Release](#)



The U.S. Department of State and Cultural Vistas are pleased to announce that Maureen Thomas (AB '24) is one of 74 Americans selected to study and work in Germany as part of the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) for Young Professionals program – now in its 41st year. The 2024-2025 CBYX Young Professionals cohort departed for Germany on July 26, 2024, and will return to the U.S. in June 2025. Participants come from a wide variety of career fields and from all over the U.S. This year, about 500 young professionals vied for a spot in this prestigious program.

While in Germany, Maureen will attend a two-month intensive language course, studying at a German university, and completing an internship in the field of engineering. Participants are usually placed with host families

throughout Germany, where they act as citizen ambassadors of the United States, promoting a positive image of the U.S. abroad, creating lifelong friendships, and building professional connections to enhance German-American relations.

While Maureen is in Germany, a group of 75 German CBYX participants will spend a year in the United States on a reciprocal exchange. German participants will study at U.S. colleges and work at local businesses while living with American host families.

## A Career in Public Service

Lori Ismail, AB '13

I can't draw a straight line connecting my study of German at U-M to my current position as a Deputy Floor Director in the U.S. House of Representatives with Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries. But I know I wouldn't be here without a strong liberal arts foundation, and four years studying German were an integral part of that education. The most important insight I gained from studying German was that learning another culture's language is the most effective form of cultural exchange. I applied my classroom experience to the real world during a summer abroad, studying in the small town of Schwäbisch Hall. There was no better place to connect with the riches of the German language and literature than there - in its natural setting.



An internship in the U.S. Senate led to other opportunities, including a job in the Obama White House's Office of Legislative Affairs and a professional staff position on the U.S. House of Representatives Rules Committee – a little-known but powerful body with a key voice in moving legislation forward. My study of German ignited a flame of interest in foreign affairs and transatlanticism. In recent years, I've been able to keep that flame alive, by participating in a fellowship to study EU institutions up close and—earlier this year—joining a parliamentary exchange with the German Bundestag and Bundesrat. As my colleagues and I met Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Members of the Bundestag to discuss challenges in America's relationship with Europe, I paused to reflect on the journey that brought me from Ann Arbor to Washington to Berlin. My U-M German Studies education provided me with the basic ingredients for a career in public service and a toolkit for lifelong intercultural communication.



# UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT FOCUS

## Academic Year in Freiburg

Adella Oehlerich, AB '25, German and International Studies Majors, Business Administration Minor



Choosing to study abroad in Freiburg for a year was the perfect choice to expand my academic and personal interests. AYF appealed to me as a year-long program, allowing me to fully integrate into European culture. There are several academic institutions in Freiburg to take courses in both English and German, so I was able to find something applicable to my major and interests. AYF also provides a ton of support and makes the transition as stress-free as possible, which I really appreciated.

Freiburg itself is the perfect blend of a fun college town, historical center, and cultural hub. Between the churches, architecture, river, and forest, the town feels straight out of a fairytale and is perfectly located near France and Switzerland. AYF has organized several field trips that have been culturally educational, and a great opportunity to explore the region - not to mention a great way to travel together and bond with others in the program. I cannot recommend AYF enough - students will not regret it.

## Undergraduate Student Kai Carter Takes Over DAAD.usa Profile

Kai Carter, AB '25, German and Linguistics Majors, Translation Studies Minor

DAAD.usa regularly turns over its instagram profile to a recent participant in the Academic Year in Freiburg program. Kai's takeover happened this past Fall where she wrote and provided images of her experiences in and around Freiburg.



101,359 likes  
daad.usa

View all 536 comments

3 DAYS AGO

Guten Tag und hallöchen! ✨ Happy Takeover Tuesday! 🇩🇪

My name is Kai! I'm a junior at the University of Michigan 🇺🇸, and last year I studied for a full year in Freiburg im Breisgau (shout-out to the program, Academic Year In Freiburg)! This year I am a youth ambassador for DAAD and a German Peer Mentor at my university. My majors are German and Linguistics, with a minor in Translation!

The biggest perks of a full-year program was definitely the time I got to explore and put myself out there! During my time abroad, I was able to enjoy lots of traveling, find close friendships and connections, and really immerse myself in German culture! I enjoyed many SCFreiburg [Sport-Club Freiburg] games, the black forest, Europa Park, the beauty of my new home, and travel both near and far! 😊 (Some of my favorite destinations were Hamburg, Germany, and Visby, Sweden!)

The academic side of things was challenging, but I grew so much by adjusting to a new academic system, writing research papers, and expanding my knowledge of German greatly.

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**Cover Images**

Kai Carter (AB '25), Pictures taken in Germany while studying  
abroad during the 2023-24 academic year.

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## German Day 2025

Alles über Österreich!

We look forward to welcoming hundreds of high school teachers and students to campus for German Day 2025 on Friday, April 11, 2025! This year's theme—'Alles über Österreich!'—is intended to explore everything about Austria, with its rich history, culture and language. Art and music have always played a prominent role in Austrian society, and some of the world's most celebrated composers and artists - Mozart, Schubert, Klimt and Hundertwasser, just to name a few - called Austria their home. From the free-spirited Empress Elizabeth "Sisi" to the father of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud, from the Habsburgs to Wienerschnitzel, Austrian influences can be seen throughout time and around the world.



**GERMAN DAY**  
— APRIL 11, 2025 —