

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures
GER 430HS Spring 2015
Goethe's Novels

Meeting Times: Tuesdays 3:10 – 5:00pm
Venue: Odette Hall 323

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Course Outline

From the moment he published his first novel, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, at the age of 24 to the appearance of *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre* three years before his death, Goethe's novels set the tone for prose writing in German. His novels are daring, bold, experimental, never satisfied with repeating formula or meeting reader-expectations. In this course we will read all of Goethe's novels. It is a cross-listed graduate and senior undergraduate course. The classroom language is English. Students in the German department are expected to read the novels in German. For students in Comparative Literature, all the novels are available in English translation.

Texts (German)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* Stuttgart: Reclam; Reclam Universalbibliothek (=RUB) 9762; ISBN 978-3-15-009762-5
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* RUB 7826; ISBN 978-3-15-007826-6
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandschaften* RUB 7835; ISBN 978-3-15-007835-8
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* RUB 7827; ISBN 978-3-15-007827-3

Texts (English)

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The sorrows of young Werther*, trans. Viktor Lange and Judith Ryan (New York: Suhrkamp 1988)
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, trans. Eric Blackall (New York: Suhrkamp 1989)
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Elective Affinities*, trans. Viktor Lange and Judith Ryan (New York: Suhrkamp 1988)
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years*, trans. and Brown (New York: Suhrkamp 1989)

Coursework and Marking Scheme

Students participating in this course will be required to attend class regularly and participate actively in classroom discussions. You should read the prescribed texts before the relevant class meetings, and complete assigned work on time. You will also be required to complete one “key-question” presentation, one “document” presentation, and one term paper.

Attendance and active participation	20%
One in-class presentation	15%
One short paper	15%
Term paper	50%

Attendance and participation: This course is evaluated according to your presentations, term paper, and classroom discussion. In the classroom, you are expected to be able to comment on the content of the week’s reading and any additional prescribed reading. You need to be able to engage with the general themes of the course as a whole, as well as the more detailed themes of the week. You are also expected to comment on the presentations of your fellow students. The aim is to improve your critical analysis and your ability to interact constructively with others in discussing literary and theoretical texts.

Key question presentation: Your presentation will identify a problem that is addressed, either directly or indirectly, in one of the novels. You will show how the problem is formulated and discuss Goethe’s approaches to this problem. You will also comment on two articles or chapters (not a whole book) that address this.

Sign up for your presentation on the class bulletin board site on Blackboard. You will speak for 15 minutes then take questions from the class.

Short paper: In this paper you will summarize one article or chapter on one (or more) of the novels. I expect you to explain how the author arrives at his or her position, and to take a stance on what the author writes. What do you find useful about it and why? What do you disagree with? What needs to be developed further?

Term Paper: It is recommended that this is a development of your “key-question” presentation. But it can also be written on a topic of your choice. Please make an appointment to consult with me as soon as you know what you want to write on. Your essay should be between 3,000 and 3,500 words, printed double-spaced Times New Roman 12pt.

Syllabus

Week 1 (6 January)	Introduction: Goethe's novels
Week 2 (13 January)	<i>Die Leiden des jungen Werthers</i>
Week 3 (20 January)	<i>Die Leiden des jungen Werthers</i>
Week 4 (27 January)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre</i>
Week 5 (3 February)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre</i>
Week 6 (10 February)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre</i>
Week 7 (24 February)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre</i>
Week 8 (3 March)	<i>Die Wahlverwandschaften</i>
Week 9 (10 March)	<i>Die Wahlverwandschaften</i>
Week 10 (17 March)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre</i>
Week 11 (24 March)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre</i>
Week 12 (31 March)	<i>Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre</i>