Washington University

Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

**Application for Senior Thesis in German,**

**Distinction in German, and Latin Honors in German**

Name: ­­

First major:

Second major: ­­

Minor(s): ­­

Do you have incompletes? Y / N

What is your present GPA in German?

What is your present cumulative GPA?

Have you participated in the Tübingen Semester/Year Abroad? Y / N

Have you participated in the Göttingen Summer program? Y / N

With which German faculty member(s) have you discussed your senior thesis?

Name(s): ­­

Would you like to request a specific faculty member to be your thesis advisor? If so, whom?

Name: ­­

This application form must be submitted to the Director of the Undergraduate Studies

**one week after the first day of classes** of your senior year (Fall semester) and

**must** be accompanied by:

1. A transcript showing all grades to date
2. A proposal for your senior thesis which includes:
	1. the title
	2. a brief description of the project (5-15 lines)
	3. a bibliography of source material (optional)
3. A brief explanation as to why you believe you are especially qualified to write a senior thesis

**Admittance to the senior thesis in German is subject to approval by the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.**

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**Guidelines for Senior Thesis in German,**

**Distinction in German, and Latin Honors in German**

The only way to receive Distinction in German and/or Latin Honors in German is by writing a senior thesis.

**The Senior Thesis in German:**

You may apply to write a senior thesis in your final year. The senior thesis is intended to provide a capstone to the German major and offers you a chance to draw together the breadth of your linguistic and cultural knowledge in the pursuit of a research project of your own design. You will work one-on-one with a faculty member in an extended conversation to craft your project and hone your analytical skills, delving deeply into the intellectual questions that engage you as a student of German. These questions may arise from coursework or from your own engagements with German culture beyond the formal university setting.

A senior thesis in German must be solidly grounded in the field of German Studies. It may be written in English or German and will usually consist of a minimum of 30 pages in length but not exceed 70 pages. The thesis must cover sub­stantive source materials and demonstrate that you have acquired deep knowledge in the designated area. The thesis will be read and evaluated by your advisor and a second faculty reader. After you submit your thesis in the Spring semester of your senior year, you may be asked to participate in a thesis defense, which consists of a collegial conversation about your thesis with your advisor and the second reader.

The prerequisites for writing write a senior thesis include1) a minimum GPA of 3.5 in German and 2) submission of a viable thesis proposal, which is due one week after the first day of classes in the Fall semester of the senior year. You are expected to discuss your project with at least one faculty member in the Department **prior to** submitting your application. You should begin thinking about your prospective project in the fall of your junior year, so that you are able to discuss possible thesis ideas with faculty in the spring semester of your junior year and then devote part of the summer before the senior year to preliminary work on the project.

Acceptance is subject to approval by the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.

After your thesis proposal is approved, you will be assigned an advisor (who must be a faculty member of the German Department) who will guide you through the research process and advise you on the content of your thesis.

Writing a thesis requires meeting the following obligations:

1. You must enroll in Ger 497 in Fall **and** Ger 498 in Spring, each counting for 3 credits. These 6 units of credit must be taken **in addition to** the 24 credit hours required to complete the German major. In other words: to receive distinction in German and to eligible for Latin Honors in German, a student will need a minimum of 30 hours of advanced German credit. Please take the required hours into account when and if you are planning a double major. For Tübingen returnees: these 6 six units of thesis credit **do *not* satisfy** the requirement that you take one 400-level German course during your senior year.

2. You must observe the stated thesis deadlines and submit a completed thesis by the final deadline. In order to be eligible for Distinction in German, the thesis must meet the criteria determined by the faculty of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures.

**Due Dates for the Thesis:**

The thesis advisor will set individualized deadlines beyond the ones mentioned below. You are required to meet these deadlines as graduation will depend on the timely completion and evaluation of your thesis. If the Fall deadlines agreed upon by you and your thesis advisor are not met, it is the prerogative of the advisor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies to decline admittance to the second semester of independent thesis work.

* **September 15**: a one to two page expanded proposal and preliminary bibliography
* **October 1**: a brief report about the progress made with the research and bibliography; a short research plan
* **November 1**: an outline of the sections of the thesis and their content
* **December 1**: written demonstration of **significant** progress (usually a draft of at least one quarter of the thesis)
* **March 1**: full draft of the thesis
* The final version of the thesis (two copies) is due the **first day after Spring Break**.

**Reminder**: in order for a student to graduate in May with either Distinction in German or Latin Honors in German, the grade for the thesis is due to the College Office **by late March**. **No excep­tions are possible.**

**Distinction in German:**

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures recognizes three levels of departmental distinction. The level of distinction is awarded at the discretion of the faculty and is based exclusively on the quality of your thesis; neither your major GPA nor your cumulative GPA determines the level of distinction. Not all students who successfully complete theses will graduate with departmental distinction.

The levels of departmental distinction are as follows:

Distinction: Awarded for very well researched and persuasively written theses; equivalent to an A-

High Distinction: Awarded for exceptionally executed theses; equivalent to an A

Highest Distinction: Awarded in very rare cases for superior theses that demonstrate truly exceptional merit; equivalent to an A+

**Latin Honors in German:**

In order to be eligible for Latin Honors in German, you must first complete the requirements for Distinction in German. Additionally, you must be eligible for Latin Honors as determined by the College of Arts and Sciences in the *Bulletin*:

*Latin Honors are determined on the basis of a student’s performance throughout eight semesters in the college. To be eligible for such honors, the student must have maintained a 3.65 grade point average through the sixth semester and must be accepted for candidacy by the relevant department or area committee. Latin Honors candidates must enroll in such courses as their department or interdisciplinary committee may require, satisfactorily complete a significant project appropriate to the nature of the discipline, and pass such written and/or oral examinations as the department or area committee may set.*

*Upon certification by the department that the Honors program has been satisfactorily completed, the student may be awarded the A.B. cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude according to the following proportions: the top 15 percent in overall grade point average of Latin honors candidates who complete the necessary requirements of their major departments will graduate summa cum laude; the next 35 percent magna cum laude; the next 50 percent cum laude.*

*To be eligible for Latin Honors, transfer students must have earned a minimum of 48 letter-graded Washington University units prior to the final semester. Grades earned at other institutions do not figure in the calculation of minimum averages required for eligibility for Latin Honors.*