

Tragedy, Comedy, Inverted World: Masterpieces of German Drama

Fall 2024

Mark W. Roche

GE 43205

Logistical Information

Class: Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:30 to 4:45 in DeBartolo Hall 306.

Office: 300 Decio Hall (at the very northern end of the third floor).

Advising Hours: Why? All students are encouraged to make use of advising hours, early and often. Come with course puzzles on which you would like think out loud or broader questions about how to make the most of your time at college. Advising hours are also an opportunity for me to better understand you and your aspirations, so come with a spirit of curiosity and expect generosity in return. / When? Tuesdays from 2:00 to 3:00 and Thursdays from 10:30 to 11:30 as well as by appointment. For appointments outside of advising hours, simply send me an e-mail that day or the day before or speak to me before or after class. Impromptu in-person meetings, with or without advance notice, can also often be arranged before or after class. Note that if too many students report conflicts during these hours, I will select different times and then update the syllabus as well as Canvas. In past semesters students have preferred [appointment slots](#), so I have continued that practice.

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Course Description

Germany, Austria, and Switzerland have one of the world's richest traditions of drama as well as arguably the greatest theorists of drama. We will discuss selected masterpieces of German drama (and possibly film), paying particular attention to the ways in which each of our works breaks expectations and advances what we might call an inverted world. The course will explore historical developments, but our primary focus will be close analysis of the works, including their ambiguities and their wrestling with tragic and comic modes of understanding the world, including interpersonal and social conflicts. Authors include Lessing, Schiller, Büchner, Hofmannsthal, Dürrenmatt, and others. Some attention will also be given to distinctive German theories of tragedy and comedy, including the singular contributions of Hegel. The seminar will be taught entirely in German. The course has been approved for WKAL and WKLC.

Calendar of Classes and Readings

August 27, 2024 Orientation

August 29, 2024 Lessing, Erster Aufzug, 7-27 (20 pages)

September 3, 2024 Lessing, Zweiter Aufzug, 28-48 (20 pages)

September 5, 2024 Lessing, Dritter Aufzug, 49-72 (23 pages)

September 10, 2024 Lessing, Vierter Aufzug, 73-95 (22 pages)

September 12, 2024 Lessing, Fünfter Aufzug, 96-119 (23 pages)

September 17, 2024 Lessing, Consolidation of Learning

September 19, 2024 Schiller, 5-36, 1.1-1.6 (31 pages)

September 24, 2024 Schiller, 37-81, 1.7-2.10 (44 pages)

September 26, 2024 Schiller, 82-112, 2.11-3.5 (30 pages)

Your one short paper (if it is on Lessing) is due on Thursday, September 26 at 11:00 p.m.

October 1, 2024 Schiller, 113-152, 3.6-4.9 (39 pages)

October 3, 2024 Schiller, 152-182, 4.10-4.23 (30 pages)

October 8, 2024 Schiller, 182-220, 5.4-5.11 (40 pages)

October 10, 2024 Theoretical Interlude (excerpts or essays)

October 15, 2024 Büchner, 5-25, Erster Akt (17 pages)

October 17, 2024 Büchner, 26-46, Zweiter Akt und Dritter Akt (20 pages)

October 22, 2024 Fall Break (no class)

October 24, 2024 Fall Break (no class)

The remainder of the schedule will be updated at a later date. At this point, we have five instead of six remaining student preference selections. Because we may choose to linger again before the end of the semester, I have yet to adjust the dates after fall break.

I have now (on 10/30/24) made those further revisions, which are below; thus this current syllabus is the second revision.

October 29, 2024 Büchner and Review

October 31, 2024 Hofmannsthal, 6-32, 1.1-1.7 (26 pages)

Your one short paper (if it is on Schiller or Büchner) is due on October 31 at 11:00 p.m.

November 5, 2024	Hofmannsthal, 32-83, 1.8-2.2 and the sketch on Canvas entitled “Preuße und Österreicher” (43 pages)
November 7, 2024	Hofmannsthal, 83-115, 2.3-2.14 (32 pages)
November 12, 2024	Hofmannsthal, 116-158, 3.1-3.14 (42 pages)
November 14, 2024	Dürrenmatt, 9-30 (21 pages)
November 19, 2024	Dürrenmatt, 30-66 (36 pages)
November 21, 2024	Dürrenmatt, 67-93 (27 pages)
November 26, 2024	Anatol I, 1-42 (41 pages)
November 28, 2024	Thanksgiving Break (no class)
December 3, 2024	Anatol II, 42-71 (29 pages)
December 5, 2024	Anatol III, 71-88 (17 pages)
December 10, 2024	Film I
December 12, 2024	Film II

You will notice that six sessions are designated as student preference. If we stay on schedule, you will be asked to indicate preferences for these final six sessions. In order to ensure lead time for texts, we will need to make choices shortly after midterm. I have given you an overabundance of choices below and starred a few (with a single or double asterisk) that I think German students might especially like, though once I get to know you better, my recommendations might shift some.

Students will be invited to nominate works or activities from the list (or from their own experience), and if the nomination receives a second, it will make the cut for voting purposes, so spend some time thinking about your preferences.

* Lessing, *Die Juden*. An early comedy by Lessing, giving evidence of his ideal of tolerance and his comic and critical sensibility for human limitations. A good choice if you like Lessing. 2 sessions.

* Büchner, *Woyzeck*: A revolutionary drama that was one of the first ever to place a truly common person at the center of a tragedy. In effect, the work becomes a drama of suffering, a kind of paratragedy. A good choice if you like Büchner. 2 sessions.

Grillparzer, *Weh dem, der lügt!* The one comedy by arguably Austria’s most famous dramatist. Also possible would be a comedy by the popular Nestroy, such as *Der Zerrissene*, or by the more elevated Raimund, such as *Der Alpenkönig und der Menschenfeind*; together these three figures form the height of Austrian drama in the

nineteenth century. A good choice if you like paradoxes and the Austrian tradition. 3 sessions.

Schnitzler, *Anatol*. A comedy about love (and failed love) by a great turn-of-the-century Viennese writer. A good choice if a modern comedy would appeal to you. 3 sessions.

** Storm, *Der Schimmelreiter*: One of the most gripping narratives in German literature. The work takes place in northern Germany and has a range of submerged, even Hegelian, tragic structures. Storm called the novella “die Schwester des Dramas.” Moreover, tragedy as a metaphysical and literary structure certainly exceeds drama alone. A good choice if you want to see tragedy in action beyond drama and want to linger with a work, as with some of our previous choices. 5 sessions.

* Freud and Witze: The idea here would be to expand our reach of comedy by integrating jokes, specifically German (and Austrian) jokes. I could give you several pages of clever German-language jokes, and we could read a short excerpt or two from Freud’s famous essay *Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewussten*. A good choice if you like jokes and want to learn some German jokes. 2 or 3 sessions.

Hochhuth, *Der Stellvertreter*. A controversial and partly historically based postwar German drama, which is critical of Pope Pius XII. It is a rare attempt at genuine tragedy in the twentieth century. A good choice if you want to engage historical drama and the puzzle of Christianity and tragedy. 6 sessions.

Murnau, *Der letzte Mann*. One of the most famous and esteemed silent films ever made. A paratragedy in the form of a drama of suffering, with a comic epilogue. The star, Emil Jannings, won the first Oscar ever. A good choice if you enjoy, or want to explore, silent cinema. 2 sessions.

Von Sternberg, *Der blaue Engel*. A famous Weimar film with Marlene Dietrich and Emil Jannings. A conflict of two worlds. A good choice if you like or want to explore Weimar cinema. 2 sessions.

Riefenstahl, *Das blaue Licht*. A mountain film by Germany’s most famous (but also notorious) female director. A silent film, impressive more for its cinematography than its content. A good choice if you want to see a mountain film and experience Riefenstahl. 2 sessions.

Fassbinder, *Die Ehe der Maria Braun*. Fassbinder is the most famous modern German director, and Maria Braun is a tragedy of stubbornness that tells the tale of a strong postwar woman. A good choice if you like, or want to explore, Fassbinder and want to see a film about the immediate postwar period and beyond. 2 sessions.

** Fatih Akin, *Im Juli*. A classic comedy set in contemporary Germany and Turkey. Akin, a German of Turkish descent, is arguably the greatest contemporary German filmmaker. A good choice if you want to see a classic comedy in a contemporary setting. 2 sessions.

Rothemund, *Sophie Scholl: Die letzten Tage*. A tragedy of self-sacrifice about one of the members of the White Rose resistance group in Nazi Germany. Also possible would be an earlier film on the whole group, directed by Vernhoeven, called *Die Weiße Rose*. A good choice if you want to explore tragedy and resistance. 2 sessions.

** Von Donnersmarck, *Das Leben der Anderen*. A deeply moving film, with moments of tragedy and reconciliation, set in East Germany. Arguably the best German film since World War II. A good choice for several reasons if you haven’t seen it or studied it before. 2 sessions.

* Fatih Akin, *Auf der anderen Seite*. A film with moments of tragedy and gestures toward

reconciliation. Set in Germany and Turkey. A good choice if you are interested in cross-cultural relations. 2 sessions.

Ade, *Toni Erdmann*. A recent comedy by a female German director. A good choice if you want to explore a recent German comedy. 2 sessions.

Discussion of Papers. 1 session.

Your final paper is due at 11:00 p.m on the day of what would have been our final written examination. This date has not yet been announced.

Great Questions

The seminar will explore a number of great questions, including:

What is the value of studying literature?

What questions, categories, and vocabulary will help us better understand and enjoy literature?

What makes a literary work great?

In what ways do great literary works offer both supertemporal and culturally-specific insights?

What is a tragic world view, and what is a comic world view?

What distinguishes each genre?

Are there links between tragedy, comedy, and religion?

What can we learn from the tragic and the comic?

What is an inverted world? What roles does it play in tragedy and comedy?

Why is evil so fascinating to us and also so difficult to combat?

Why is sacrifice necessary?

What triggers identity crises and how does one best deal with them?

How are individual and collective identity crises related to historical developments?

Can we understand identity better through the lens of tragedy and comedy?

What worlds and perspectives are opened by tragedy and comedy?

How do we know which values to elevate?

What is the relation between ambiguity and aesthetic value?

What specific contributions can art make to our understanding of humanity and of the world?

What makes a literary work great?

Learning Goals

1) Engagement with Great Works: Students will be able to discuss and analyze a selection of great works along with basic literary concepts and historical context relevant for these works and for much future reading of literature. Students will grow in their appreciation of the value of reading fascinating works and asking great questions as part of a life-long process of continual learning. In so doing, they will cultivate their enjoyment of the life of the mind, building resources for the continued development of their inner world, and they will learn to value complexity and ambiguity. In relating to these works and questions in a personal way, they will also recognize a strong relationship between their academic work and personal lives.

2) German Language Skills: Students will advance in their ability to read, write, speak, and understand German. Through practice they will reinforce basic issues as well as improve their capacity for articulate and precise mastery of the language, both spoken and written, and they will improve their basic communication skills insofar as they accompany the organization and communication of their thoughts.

3) German Cultural Literacy: Students will become familiar with a selection of important and influential literary works from the German tradition, thus increasing their exposure to the kinds of works that have been part of most well-educated Germans' repertoire across the ages. In understanding, analyzing, and interpreting these works, students will also gain an indirect window onto selected aspects of German literary, intellectual, and social history.

4) Hermeneutic Capacities: Students will improve their skills in interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating literary and cultural works. They will develop their capacity to ask pertinent and interesting questions and to argue for and against various interpretations. They will recognize the extent to which the parts and wholes of great works relate to one another.

5) Intellectual Virtues: Students will improve their capacities to process difficult materials, formulate clear questions, listen carefully and attentively, explore ideas through dialogue, and express their thoughts eloquently and persuasively. They will also continue to develop various intellectual virtues, such as intellectual hospitality, diplomacy, courage, honesty, perseverance, patience, curiosity, and wonder.

Principles of Student Learning

The course will be organized in accordance with several common-sense pedagogical principles, most of which were embodied already by Socrates and which have been given empirical verification in our age:

- *Active Learning:* Students are not passive minds into whose heads content is to be poured. Students learn by becoming involved, asking questions, engaging in discussions, solving problems, defending positions, writing and rewriting papers, in short, by energetically devoting themselves to the learning process. Educators speak of active or student-centered learning. Students learn most effectively when they are actively engaged, not simply listening or absorbing material. In fact simply taking an exam, even when you perform poorly, helps you learn the material. Accordingly, this course will be student-centered, with considerable focus on student-student discussion, regular written contributions, and paper topics chosen by students.
- *Peer Learning:* Students learn greatly from their peers. You are influenced by the people with whom you spend your time, for good or for ill. Who among your friends awakens your most noble intellectual passions and helps you become a better interlocutor and person? The research shows that the student's peer group is the single greatest source of influence on cognitive and affective development in college. We will enjoy many student-student discussions in which the teacher simply plays a guiding role. You are also encouraged to discuss our various texts and questions with one another and with others

beyond the classroom.

- *Existential Engagement*: Students learn more when they are existentially engaged in the subject, when they care about the questions under discussion and recognize their significance. If you volunteer in a soup kitchen, your course on the economics of poverty takes on a different meaning. If you spend a semester in Berlin, German history and politics become far more important to you. To that end and because of their intrinsic value, we will read these works not only to understand them in their own context, as interesting and important as that is, but also to ask, to what extent they speak to us today. Can we learn not only *about* these works, but also *from* them? That means relating these works to your past experiences, daily lives, and future aspirations, without falling into a purely subjective interpretation of the meaning.
- *Intrinsic Motivation*: Motivation plays a large role in learning. The best learning comes not from external motivation, seeking external approbation and praise, but from intrinsic motivation, from identification with a vision of wanting to learn.
- *High Expectations and Feedback*: Students learn the most when their teachers have high academic expectations of them and when students receive helpful feedback that supports them in their quest to meet those high expectations. To know what you don't know is to help focus your learning. A combination of being challenged and being supported helps learning immensely. You can be sure that if the coach of an athletic team is nonchalant about physical fitness, discipline, timing, teamwork, and the like, the team will not win many games. So, too, an easy A will not help you in the long run, as you interview for highly competitive postgraduate fellowships or positions at the best graduate schools or with the leading firms. The best way to learn is to shoot very high and to recognize what might still be needed to meet those high aspirations. Detailed feedback and discriminating grades are ways of pointing out strengths and weaknesses to students, challenging them to stretch, so that they are not lulled into thinking that their current capacities cannot be improved, and they needn't learn more.
- *Effortful Learning*: Many think that easier paths to learning make for better learning. In truth, the evidence shows that easier learning is often superficial and quickly forgotten, whereas effortful learning leads to deeper and more durable learning as well as greater mastery and better applications. For example, trying to solve a problem before being taught a solution leads to better learning. Hard learning, making mistakes and correcting them, is not wasted effort but important work; it improves your intelligence. Striving to surpass your current abilities and experiencing setbacks are part of true learning, which, unlike superficial learning, develops and changes the brain, building new connections and increasing intellectual capacities. For better learning, difficulties are desirable: the harder the effort, the greater the benefit. For example, instead of simply reviewing notes on our readings, you might reflect on the reading: What are the key ideas? What ideas are new to me? How would I explain them to someone else? How does what I read relate to what I already know? What questions do I have? What arguments speak for and against a given position?

- *Breadth of Context:* If you put what you are learning into a larger context and connect it with what you already know and are learning in your other courses, your learning will be deeper and more stable. If you can connect a story, an idea, or a principle as you uncover it to other stories, ideas, and principles or to what you yourself think, then the stories, ideas, and principles will more likely resonate for you in the future. In our class, seeing connections across works as well as seeing connections between our discussions and discussions and works in other classes as well as your own life will help give you that larger context. The more you know, the more you can learn. Ask yourself, what larger lessons can be drawn from what I am exploring.
- *Faculty-Student Contact.* The greatest predictor of student satisfaction with college is frequent interaction with faculty members. Students are more motivated, more committed, and more involved and seem to learn more when they have a connection to faculty members. So take advantage of opportunities to connect with your teachers. Drop in during my office hours (come when you have a need or a question or simply when you would like to chat). Take advantage as well of other opportunities we will find for informal conversations. And don't hesitate to ask for help.
- *Meaningful Investment of Time:* Students who major in disciplines that are less demanding of students' time tend to make fewer cognitive gains in college. Everyone who wants to learn a complex and demanding subject must make a substantial effort. Learning occurs not only during class time. It derives also from the investment you make in learning, the quality of the time you spend reading, thinking, writing, and speaking with others outside of class. For this three-credit advanced seminar you will want to spend more than six hours per week preparing. An advantage you have in this course is that the works are challenging and fun, so your study can be work and pleasure simultaneously.
- *Diversity:* Another learning principle is diversity. When you discover that your roommate is Muslim, you suddenly become much more curious about Islam. That is not especially likely at Notre Dame, so we need to cultivate intellectual diversity, engaging works from other cultures and in languages other than English. We want to hear different perspectives from one another, even the most unusual, since thinking outside the box can help us see more clearly. Do not be shy about asking off-the-wall questions or making unusual comments. And don't let contrary views bother you emotionally. All such contributions can be useful, as the process of discovering truth involves listening to various perspectives. In addition, many of the works we will study introduce us to radically different world-views from our own, but precisely in their difference, they may provide interesting antidotes to some of the cliches of the present.
- *Self-Reflection:* Students learn more when they are aware of how they best learn (so that they can focus their energies), what they most lack, and how they can learn more. How can I become a better student? How can I learn to guide myself? We may occasionally have meta-discussions in which we reflect on our discussion at a higher level. Around what central interpretive question did the debate we were just having revolve? Why did we relinquish one interpretation and adopt another? How would we describe the evidence

that spoke for and against the various positions? Why was today's discussion particularly successful or less successful? What is helping us learn? The latter question underscores why I have just placed these principles before you.

Student Contributions to Learning and Assessment Percentages

50% of the grade will be based on regular contributions, oral and written, during the semester. 50% will be based on more formal written work, where you will be asked to perform at the highest possible level.

The goals of each assignment and of all evaluation are to improve understanding and performance. For more detailed comments on these assignments and on assessment guidelines, see the syllabus supplement.

1) Class Contribution: 25%;

Students will be expected to contribute regularly to discussions and to adopt various facilitative roles during the semester. Class contribution is not equivalent with the quantity of class participation; instead both quantity and quality will be considered. Because student learning is aided by active student participation in the classroom, students will want to prepare well and contribute regularly and meaningfully to discussions.

After the review of the syllabus, the language for this class will be German.

Brief Presentations

Students will be asked to give one brief formal presentation, with a one-page written hand-out. You should list on the second page of your handout a list of sources you consulted. Your oral delivery should be between 5 and 10 minutes. The topics will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. I would prefer that the bold topics be chosen first. However, you are free to choose the topic(s) that interest you the most.

Lessing (to be presented no later than our third session)

Schiller

Hegel

Büchner

Hofmannsthal

Dürrenmatt

Student Preference

Student Preference

Student Preference

2) Short Written Contributions: 25%

For each class, with occasional publicly announced exceptions, students will prepare a few sentences of insights or questions. These daily exercises will help you prepare, allow you to

explore ideas independently, and will be a superb strategy to aid you in your developing language skills. *These will always be in German, typed and double-spaced, and brought to each class.*

In terms of length you might shoot for around 150 words, give or take. If you are struggling with basic issues of grammar, you might write less but try to make fewer mistakes. If you have good command of grammar, you should feel free to write more.

We will occasionally draw on your comments in class, either directly or indirectly, and I will collect them each time to provide you with feedback. Do not shy away from experimenting with more difficult formulations. Your writing (and thinking) will improve as you stretch your capacities.

On occasion we may experiment instead with your participation in a Discussion on Canvas, so that everyone can read your contribution in advance of class. Such variations in the routine will be announced well in advance.

You need not pursue one sustained reflection, but you are certainly free to do so. You may also choose to write isolated insights of a sentence each. You should also feel free to ask questions. You may include genuine questions to which you are seeking an answer; questions designed to elicit discussion (that is, open-ended, questions that encourage analysis and debate); or statements that explore the following: an insight that you have into the work, an idea that you find compelling or less compelling, an aspect of the work that struck you as unusually significant, a comparison with earlier passages or works, etc. You are even free to formulate a possible paper topic via such a daily submission. I will usually offer you some pre-reading questions; if so, one or more of your contributions could respond to such questions, though this is not obligatory.

Please note that on the day you deliver your presentation, your handout will substitute for a written submission on the regular material. Also on the day when you submit your first paper, you are exempt from submitting a regular daily submission. In addition, you may skip two other sessions of your choosing during the semester.

3) One Shorter Paper (5-7 pages): 20%;

Students will write one shorter paper of 5-7 pages in German (approximately 1,500 to 2,000 words). The short paper is to be rewritten after you receive my comments and then resubmitted within one week of their return to you. Rewriting is an excellent strategy to improve your capacity for writing. The grade will be adjusted based on the revision.

Here are some guidelines for both your short and your long paper:

- Students are free to choose their topics within the context of the course and its readings. Creative topics and strategies are welcome. Students should not hesitate to think out loud with me about various options before settling on a topic. Starting early is always a wise strategy.
- Please note that for at least one of your papers during the semester, you are required to review and cite at least one work of secondary literature. If you do not do so for your first

- paper, this will become obligatory for your final paper, where in fact it would fit well.
- All papers should be Times New Roman or a similar standard font, 12 point, and double spaced.
- Each paper should have a title and pagination, and you should list at the bottom the number of words.
- You will want to use [MLA style](#). (MLA stands for the Modern Language Association.) This style is widespread in the humanities and relatively simple and user-friendly. The library has reference materials that spell out MLA style, such as the *MLA Handbook* or the *MLA Style Manual*, and there are short versions available on the Web. With permission, students may choose an alternative format.
- Unless we very consciously move to Canvas for assignment submissions, please submit your papers via email (to mroche@nd.edu) as a Word document. In either case, your file name should have three elements: your name, the course number or some such designation, such as 4xx or Seminar, and the paper number (for example Andrew GE43203 Paper 1 or Andrew GE 43203 Paper 1 Revised). This will make it much easier for me to organize and archive submissions.
- All paper submissions that are more than one hour late will be downgraded a partial grade. A further drop of a partial grade will occur for every 24 hours that passes beyond the due date and time.

The syllabus offers you two different deadlines for submission, depending on what works you choose to address and which deadline fits best into your schedule.

4) **One Longer Paper (8-12 pages): 30%;**

Students will write one longer paper. Papers should be 8-12 pages in length, double-spaced, and typed (2,500 to 3,500 words). This longer written assignment will allow students to engage some aspect of the course in greater depth and with a certain level of independence.

In selecting a topic for a longer paper in particular, students are encouraged to visit me during advising hours or after class and to think out loud about interests and options.

Please note that for at least one of your papers during the semester, you are required to review and cite at least one work of secondary literature. If you did not do so for your first paper, this will become obligatory for your final paper, where in fact such integration would fit well.

Required Works

Lessing, *Minna von Barnhelm, oder Das Soldatenglück: Ein Lustspiel in fünf Aufzügen* (Suhrkamp BasisBibliothek) 978-3518188736

Schiller, *Don Karlos*. Textausgabe mit Kommentar und Materialien (Reclam XL – Text und Kontext) 978-3150161517

Büchner, *Leonce und Lena*. Textausgabe mit Kommentar und Materialien (Reclam XL – Text und Kontext) 978-3150161340

Hofmannsthal, *Der Schwierige. Lustspiel in drei Akten* (Reclam) 978-3-15-018040-2

Dürrenmatt, *Die Physiker. Eine Komödie in zwei Akten* (Diogenes) 978-3257230475

Recommended Work

We will be making occasional references to European and German history. Most of you will have a basic understanding of some of the important events—the Reformation, the French Revolution, the revolution of 1848, and the unification of Germany in 1871—but for those of you without basic knowledge and for those of you who wish to bore more deeply, you might wish to consult the work below for historical orientation.

Manfred Mai's *Deutsche Geschichte*. Weinheim: Beltz, 2024. Readable and accessible. In addition to a print copy, a recorded version of the book is on Library Reserves. This also offers you a great way to practice your listening comprehension.

Canvas

I have placed some materials on Canvas and will continue to do so on an occasional basis. Please note in particular the Module tab and the Files tab. Under Files you will (for now) find folders labeled Exercises; Grammar; Optional Materials; Pronunciation; Readings; Study Questions; and Vocabulary. At various times I may draw your attention to one or another folder or file. Study Questions will include pre-reading questions to help guide your thinking as you process and prepare the works. However, these will also be posted on the relevant modules.

Reference Works and Books on Library Reserve

In terms of orientation to the authors, the best simple introductions to topics and writers can be found in the PT section. There you will find, for example, the *Encyclopedia of German Literature*, the *Oxford Companion to German Literature*, the *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte*, the *Metzler Lexikon Autoren*, the *Metzler Lexikon Literatur*, and other such works, which have entries on topics, authors, and works.

A meaningful avenue for further reading might well involve more primary reading than secondary reading, that is, additional works by the authors we are reading instead of secondary works about them. Still, secondary works can be useful for an initial orientation and are essential for more advanced scholarly work. This course will require some secondary reading for at least one of your papers.

If you go to the stacks for any of our authors, you will find a rich set of primary and secondary works. You are likely to note some books that offer orientation. Besides generic introductions, in German and in English, you might note the following:

- The Rowohlt series offers biographies, with ample pictures and quotations.
- The Reclam series offers notes on the work itself along with supplemental materials, usually concerning background and reception.
- The Beck series offers overviews, always with a biography.

- The Metzler volumes offer biography and references to secondary literature, by work.
- The Metzler Handbücher offer chapters on major issues and works.
- The Twayne and Ungar series, which tend to be older, offer simple introductions and overviews in English.

Note that all of our texts include varying amounts of supplementary orientation materials. Most assist with difficult vocabulary words.

For your forays into secondary literature I recommend three obvious avenues: consultation with me; exploration of the stacks; and targeted and thematic OneSearch searches. For those of you who choose to do extensive research (and eventually thesis work), two other resources are *Germaistik* and the *Bibliographie der deutschen Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft* (BDSL Online)

Guides to Further Resources

A useful overview of sources and types of sources for the study of German literature is Carsten Zelle, *Kurze Bücherkunde für Literaturwissenschaftler* (Münich: Francke, 1998). Hansjürgen Blinn's *Informationshandbuch Deutsche Literaturwissenschaft* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1990) can guide you to archives for various authors; this could be relevant for students seeking grants to do research in Germany.

Since you will be consulting secondary literature, you will be using the resources of the Library. Here are two guides that could be helpful to you, one on [German Language and Literature](#) and one on [Contemporary Germany](#).

Zoom

In the event that it is necessary for us to meet via Zoom, I will send out an announcement with the necessary link. If a student expects to be absent and makes a request, we will try to record the class, after which it will be available on Canvas (Panopto Video).

Appendix 1: Student Presentations and Explorations

Student Presentations

Students will be asked to give one brief formal presentation, with a one-page written hand-out in German and oral delivery in German of approximately 5-10 minutes. For presentations beyond Lessing, you will present your Referat on the first day we discuss that particular author. Students who are not prepared to deliver on schedule will be graded accordingly, since delays will affect the contextual learning of your peers. Topics are listed above, and dates will be set after the choices are all made.

For the formal presentations themselves, here are some basic expectations.

- If you go well over ten minutes, I may stop you. Discipline in delivery is a virtue, so do not be surprised.
- Do not read your text; instead learn to speak from notes.
- Choose items that you yourself would be interested in hearing, not items that you somehow think should be included for the sake of completeness. Choose what is essential and interesting, what you would want to know about the person.
- Define any words that you think your peers might not know and speak clearly, loudly, and slowly, so that everyone understands you. (Your presentation after all is intended more for your classmates than for me.)
- To prepare your presentation, use primarily the reference section of the Library. Web resources are uneven, whereas books selected for the reference area will have gone through a more elaborate peer review process. This will also allow you to gain some sense of available resources for the future. Obviously any images are likely to be found on the Web.
- Please list your sources on the second page of your handout.
- PowerPoint is not obligatory but has tended to be very well received by other students.

I will give you some basic feedback on grammar, pronunciation, content, and delivery. In past semesters, suggestions on delivery have included, for example, the following: speak at a reasonable pace, that is, slowly enough so that your peers can follow you; finish your presentation within the allotted time (this may mean a private trial run); present less material so that the more important issues are highlighted; speak freely instead of reading the presentation (speaking freely is not only a valuable skill, your audience will be able to absorb your ideas more easily); and introduce and define new vocabulary words, so that your peers are able to absorb everything you say.

Appendix 2: Syllabus Supplement

On Canvas you will find the syllabus supplement, which includes the following sections and subsections.

Language Resources and Information

Learning and Mastering a Language

Dictionaries

Vocabulary

Grammar

Writing in German

Pope Francis on the Role of Literature and Formation

Grading Criteria

Policy on Attendance and Tardiness

Grading Scale for the University of Notre Dame

Criteria for Grading Class Contribution

Criteria for Grading Short Written Contributions

Criteria for Grading Papers

Departmental and University Policies, Guidelines, and Support Structures

40000-Level Student Learning Outcomes

Departmental Policy on Anti-Racist, Anti-Authoritarian Pedagogy

Disability Accommodation
Support for Student Mental Health at Notre Dame
Student Privacy Statement
Academic Code of Honor
Generative AI, True Learning, and Academic Integrity