

# Goethe's *Faust*

Spring 2010, Rutgers University  
German 16:470:626 [66202]  
Mondays 4:30-7:10pm  
Seminar Room, 172 College Ave. (CAC)

Prof. Nicholas Rennie  
O. hrs. O. hrs. Mon. 2:45-3:45pm, & by  
appointment  
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## . COURSE DESCRIPTION

Goethe's *Faust* is often considered the most important work both of Goethe's life, and of the modern German literary tradition. Written and revised over six decades, the play updates an old German story about experimentation and the limits of human autonomy; it integrates, recasts and anticipates 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century developments in European intellectual history; it adopts or develops virtually every metric and generic form that would be available in German by the time of Goethe's death in 1832; and it has been invoked as a test case by literary, aesthetic, philosophical, political and social theories of the past 200 years. This course combines close readings of the play in its various historical contexts, and analysis of a broad range of theoretical projects that have focused on this text, especially in recent decades.

Discussion in English. Primary literature available in English. Secondary literature in English and German. Students in the German program are expected to read German primary texts (e.g. *Faust*) in the original language, and cite them in German in their papers.

## . REQUIREMENTS

1. Weekly attendance and preparation.
2. One 20-minute presentation on a secondary text.
3. Two quizzes.
4. Final paper (3,000 – 3,500 words), in English or German, due **May 10, 2010**. Submit either on paper (double-spaced, regular font), or electronically to [nrennie@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:nrennie@rci.rutgers.edu) (get in touch with me if you don't receive a confirmation of receipt from me within a day). Be sure to set up an appointment to discuss your final paper topic with me by 11/5 at the latest.
5. Undergraduate students should see me separately about requirements, which will involve two shorter papers rather than a single long one.

## . GRADE

Class participation, including presentation	10%
Quizzes	35%
Paper, due May 10, 2010	55%

Auditors: one 20-minute presentation, and weekly attendance.

To help give you an early sense of the overall structure of Goethe's play, and to make it easier to understand references to various parts of the play in the secondary readings, please be sure to read the whole play through at least once by the end of February.

Quizzes: *Faust* is a brilliant, complex, long, unwieldy, sometimes quite baffling play. In many regards it is – to cite a description by Goethe himself – *Inkommensurabel*. The point of the quizzes is to help ensure that, beyond focusing on isolated passages or ideas that especially interest you, you also get to know the play as a whole in some detail.

## • **GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

A=90-100%; B+=85-89; B=80-84; C+=75-79; C=70-74; D=65-69; F=64 and below.

## • **REQUIRED TEXTS (YOU WILL NEED TO ORDER AND BUY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING)**

Students in the German program are expected to read German primary texts (e.g. Faust) in the original language, and cite them in German in their papers. Since much of Goethe's drama is hard to make much sense of without supporting notes, and since you'll need a good critical edition to cite from, I am asking that students in the German program order the following: Faust: Text und Kommentar. Ed. Albrecht Schöne. Insel, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-3458347002.

Students not in the German program are of course free to consult German versions but may rely on a translation. Some of the many possibilities (and these include notes):

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang, Walter W. Arndt, and Cyrus Hamlin. Faust : A Tragedy. Interpretive Notes, Contexts, Modern Criticism. 2nd ed. New York; London: W.W. Norton, 2001.
- --. Faust I & II. 2 vols. Tr. David Luke. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- --. Faust I & II. Tr. David Constantine. London; New York: Penguin, 2005 (Part I), 2009 (Part II).

## • **COURSE SAKAI WEBSITE**

A website for this course is available to enrolled students at [sakai.rutgers.edu](http://sakai.rutgers.edu). You will need to access this site to download certain materials not included in the books from the store (select *Resources* to find these texts, which are marked as “pdf” in the list of weekly readings below), and in order to submit your paper(s) (via the *Assignments* link). At the site you will also find an updated copy of the syllabus, archives of announcements and e-mails sent to the class, a “discussion and private messages” forum that you can use to contact other students individually or collectively, a course schedule, and links to the course's library eReserves and the University's interim academic integrity policy.

## • **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to his or her dean for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Please see the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>, and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues. To point out just one common but serious mistake: note that it is *never* acceptable to copy language from the Internet and present it as your own.

## • **CELL PHONES**

The use of cell phones and other text-messaging devices during class is strictly forbidden. Those seen using such devices during class will be asked to leave immediately. Their dismissal will count as an absence and may result in a lowering of their overall grade.

## • **DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible as the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days. Students are encouraged to speak with teachers about these issues at the beginning of the term. All such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

## PHOTOCOPIES

Department photocopying fees add up quickly and impressively; we will therefore need to collect from each student 5 cents per page toward the cost of handouts other than the syllabus, quizzes and tests. I plan to keep the use of such handouts to a minimum, however, relying instead on you to download and print out all electronic materials indicated in the list of weekly readings.

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

1. 1/25/10 INTRODUCTION  
(chap. 1-9, 62-68) / *The History of the Damnable Life and Deserved Death of Doctor John Faustus*. London; New York: G. Routledge; E. P. Dutton, 1925, 65-80, 197-208 (chap. 1-8, 58-63) [pdf].
2. 2/1/10 LITERARY BACKGROUND I
  - *Faust* ll. 1-353.
  - Bible, 1. Buch Mose (Genesis) 1-3 [Gutenberg <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/luther/bibel/mose1.htm>] / Genesis 1-3 [<http://www.gutenberg.net/catalog/world/search> e-text # 8001]
  - Bible, Das Buch Hiob (Book of Job) at least chapters 1-10, 32-42 [Gutenberg <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/luther/bibel/hjob.htm>] / <http://www.gutenberg.net/catalog/world/search> e-text # 8018, or <http://bible.oremus.org/>
  - Hoffmeister, Gerhart. "Goethe's Faust and the Theatrum Mundi-Tradition in European Romanticism." *Journal of European Studies* 13.1-2 (1983): 42-55 [pdf].
3. 2/8/10 LITERARY BACKGROUND II
  - *Faust* ll. 354-807.
  - Kittler, Friedrich A., "The Scholar's Tragedy: Prelude in the Theater," in: Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1990, 3-24 [pdf].
  - *Das Volksbuch von Doktor Faust (Historia von Doctor Johann Fausten)*. Ed. Leander Petzoldt. Stuttgart: E. Klett, 1981<sup>1</sup> (anonymous, 1587), 8-30, 115-26
4. 2/15/10 FROM URFAUST TO THE COMPLETION OF FAUST PART I
  - *Faust* ll. 808-4612 (end of Part I of the play)
  - Boyle, Nicholas. *Goethe: The Poet and the Age I* (Oxford, England; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1991), 212-29 [pdf].
  - Presentation: "Metrik und Strophik" (*Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Faust-Dichtungen*. Ed. Ulrich Gaier. Stuttgart: P. Reclam, 1999, vol. 3, 796-811).
5. 2/22/10 TYING UP THE PACT
  - *Faust* ll. 4613-4727; 11043-12111.
  - Brown, Jane K. *Faust: Theater of the World*. New York; Toronto; New York: Twayne Publishers; Maxwell Macmillan Canada; Maxwell Macmillan International, 1992, 3-34 [pdf].

**NB: Finish reading through *Faust I & II* at least once by end of February.**

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[istoria\\_titel.htm](#), and continuing until you've read through: [http://www.odysseetheater.com/faust/historia/faust\\_historia\\_08.htm](http://www.odysseetheater.com/faust/historia/faust_historia_08.htm). To see a version that hasn't been modernized, click on [http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/germanica/Chronologie/16Jh/Faustus/fau\\_intr.html](http://www.hs-augsburg.de/~harsch/germanica/Chronologie/16Jh/Faustus/fau_intr.html).

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<sup>1</sup> You can also read a modern German version of this text, from the Herzog-August-Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, online, beginning at [http://www.odysseetheater.com/faust/historia/faust\\_historia\\_titel.htm](http://www.odysseetheater.com/faust/historia/faust_historia_titel.htm).

6. 3/1/10 MIDTERM

- Midterm quiz: five 10-minute short essays on passages (given in both German and English) from the readings assigned so far. Identify in each passage: speaker, location in the text, thematic context; and briefly but clearly indicate larger ideas that are relevant to the passage.
- Hart, Gail K. "Errant Strivings: Goethe, Faust and the Feminist Reader." *From Goethe to Gide: Feminism, Aesthetics and the Literary Canon in France and Germany, 1770-1936*. Ed. Lesley Sharpe. Exeter, England: U of Exeter P, 2005. 7-21 [pdf].

7. 3/8/10 PART II, ACT I

- *Faust* II. 4613-6565.
- Gray, Richard T. *Money Matters: Economics and the German Cultural Imagination, 1770-1850*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008, 346-400 [pdf].

8. 3/22/10 PART II, ACT II

- *Faust* II. 6566-8487.
- Brown, *Faust: Theater of the World*, 68-82 [pdf].

9. 3/29/10 PART II, ACT III

- *Faust* II. 8488-10038.
- Moretti, in: Goethe, Johann Wolfgang, Walter W. Arndt, and Cyrus Hamlin. *Faust: A Tragedy. Interpretive Notes, Contexts, Modern Criticism*. 2nd ed. New York; London: W.W. Norton, 2001, 611-34 [pdf] (the full text appears in Moretti, Franco. *Modern Epic: The World-System from Goethe to García Márquez*. Trans. Quintin Hoare. London: Verso, 1994, 1-98).

**By April 2: be sure to have discussed with me your ideas about your final paper topic.**

10. 4/5/10 PART II, ACT IV

- *Faust* II. 10039-11042.
- Mieszkowski, Jan. "Faust at War." *Studies in Romanticism* 48.1 (2009): 139-57 [pdf].
- Vaget, Hans Rudolf. "Goethe's *Faust* Today: A 'Post-Wall' Reading." *Interpreting Goethe's Faust Today*. Ed. Cyrus Hamlin. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1994. 43-58 [pdf].

11. 4/12/10 PART II, ACT V

- *Faust* II. 11043-12111.
- Brodsky, Claudia. "Technology as Timelessness: Building and Language in Faust." *International Faust Studies: Adaptation, Reception, Translation*. Ed. Lorna Fitzsimmons. London, England: Continuum, 2008. 70-87 [pdf].

12. 4/19/10 FINAL QUIZ

- Final Quiz: same format and length as the midterm, but covering the entire play.
- Discussion of topics and approaches for final papers.

13. 4/26/10 SEMIOTICS, GENRES

- Flax, Neil M. "The Presence of the Sign in Goethe's Faust." *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 98.2 (1983): 183-203 [pdf].
- Presentation: "Gattungen" ["Genres"] (Gaier vol. 3, 865-70).

14. 5/3/10 CONCLUSION

- Discussion of paper topics.

**May 10, 2010 Final paper due:** 3,000 – 3,500 words, in English or German. Submit as an MS Word document via the *Assignments* link at the course Sakai site. When you're finished, be sure to double-check that your paper is indeed posted as an attachment at this site.