

Ohio German Studies Workshop 2014

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Ohio State University announces a new initiative for German Studies involving all faculty at colleges and universities throughout the state. The Ohio German Studies Workshop (OGSW), which will take place in the fall every year, is designed as a forum for Ohio German Studies and an opportunity for colleagues across the state to become better acquainted with each other, with the research that is being conducted in German Studies, and with the issues that we all face as German scholars in higher education institutions in the twenty-first century.

The purpose of the OGSW is thus twofold: to provide a forum for faculty members at institutions of higher education in Ohio to get to know each other and their intellectual activities; and to enable discussions among Ohio Germanists at colleges and universities about common challenges to German Studies in the changing environment of higher education.

German occupies a very special place in Ohio and the Midwestern states. The extensive German heritage in the general population and in many of our students has long supported our efforts; it is no coincidence that Ohio supports some of the oldest German programs in the United States. In recent years German programs have undergone transitions here and across the country. We have expanded our programs to include new and exciting interdisciplinary directions; we have fostered more education in international studies and taken advantage of educational opportunities abroad; and we have explored technological changes in new media and the internet. The OGSW will also give us the opportunity to share thoughts on the innovative directions that have characterized our programs.

The Ohio German Studies Workshop (OGSW) is conceived as a one-day event. It will consist of four sessions, two in the morning, two in the afternoon. In the two morning and first afternoon session, panels of three will give brief fifteen to twenty minute presentations regarding their current research. After each presentation there will be ten to fifteen minutes of discussion. In the fourth session a panel of five or six faculty members will present ten-minute talks on an important issue for German Studies in the current climate for higher education, and these issues will then be open for discussion by the group.

The initial OGSW will take place on the Ohio State campus on **Saturday, October 11, 2014**, in the Blackwell Inn, 2110 Tuttle Park Pl., Columbus, OH 43210. The first session will commence at 9:30 AM; the second session will begin at 11:15. After a break for lunch of about an hour, during which participants can socialize and discuss issues privately, the Workshop will begin again at 2:00. The fourth session should be able to start at around 3:45, and the formal proceedings will be finished at around 5:30. Coffee and snacks at breaks, as well as lunch at noontime, will be supplied by OSU.

There are approximately sixty regular faculty members engaged in German Studies at colleges and universities in Ohio. If we expand to include emeriti and non-permanent faculty, the number would reach approximately a hundred. Not all faculty will be interested in attending the OGSW. But from the sampling we have done, the idea is a popular one. All faculty engaged in German at colleges and universities in the state are welcome to attend. Since we conceive of this event as ongoing, faculty presenters will rotate annually to ensure that everyone has a chance to present over the next few years.

This year we would like to inaugurate the OGSW with three research panels in the following areas: German film and visual culture; German literature and culture; and German language teaching and learning. Among the topics we are considering for the general panel are curricular reform, education abroad programs, liaisons with high school programs, funding, outcomes assessment, approaches to enrollment, and teacher training.