

Jesus College, Oxford



Subject Notes:

EUROPEAN & MIDDLE EASTERN LANGUAGES

Academic Staff

Fellows

Professor Katrin Kohl is a Fellow and Tutor in German. She teaches German literature from 1750. Her research focuses on poetry and poetics, and on the theory and practice of metaphor. Currently she is on research leave, leading an interdisciplinary research project on Creative Multilingualism for the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages.

Professor Caroline Warman, Fellow and Tutor in French. She teaches and researches eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French literature and thought, and has translated novels and essays from French. She has just finished a book about Enlightenment philosopher Diderot and co-organised a congress on the Enlightenment for 1500 people from all over the world. She teaches French literature and thought and also translation to all years.

Dr Kirstin Gwyer is a Departmental Lecturer in German at Jesus. She teaches German literature from the eighteenth century to the present, with a special interest in twentieth- and twenty-first-century prose fiction, and translation into and out of German. Her research interests are in the first-generation Holocaust novel, contemporary German-Jewish and American-Jewish literature, German memory writing since 1945, and postmodernism and post-postmodernism.

Dr Julie Curtis, a Fellow of Wolfson College, is a Lecturer in Russian for Jesus College. Her research interests lie in twentieth-century Russian literature, especially Mikhail Bulgakov and Evgenii Zamiatin. She has also published on the literature of the Gorbachev era.

Dr Elena Lombardi, a Fellow of Balliol College, is a Lecturer in Italian for Jesus College. Her teaching interests focus on Dante, early Italian poetry, and Medieval Studies.

Dr Daniela Omlor, Fellow in Spanish at Lincoln College, also looks after Jesus students. Her research focuses on contemporary Spanish literature, with a particular emphasis on memory, trauma and exile. Her first book examined the role of memory and self-representation in the works of Jorge Semprún. Currently, she is exploring the interaction between memory and fiction in recent novels by Javier Cercas, Javier Marías and Antonio Muñoz Molina and others, in order to investigate how the recovery of historical memory in Spanish novels increasingly extends beyond the Spanish Civil War.

About the Course

This course in European and Middle Eastern Languages (EMEL) enables students to combine papers in one of the languages taught in the faculty of Modern Languages with papers in Arabic, Hebrew, Persian or Turkish, thus providing opportunities to take advantage of the cultural linkages which exist between a number of European and Middle Eastern languages. For example, appropriate combinations might well be French and Arabic, German and Turkish, or Hebrew and Russian, but even some of the less obvious pairings would provide similar cultural and historical linkage. Thus Spanish and Turkish would be an interesting combination for the history of Sephardi Judaism, while Persian and Portuguese are important for the study of early imperialism.

EMEL at Oxford

Through its long-standing traditions and more recent gifts, Oxford has unique resources for the study of Middle Eastern and Modern Languages. The Bodleian Library and Taylor Institute Library (for Modern Languages) have a magnificent collection of books and manuscripts. The Taylor Institute Library is one of the biggest research and lending libraries devoted to modern European languages in the world. Associated with the University is the Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, which houses the Leopold Muller Library with more than 35,000 volumes in Hebrew and more than 7,000 volumes in Western languages.

The course consists of two parts. The first year leads up to the Preliminary Examination, and at this stage the elements of the course are compulsory, while the remainder of the course offers a wide range of options and prepares undergraduates for the Final Examination. Teaching takes the form of tutorials (involving two or more students) and classes, which will usually be organised and taken by Fellows and Lecturers of the College, although those pursuing some of the more specialised options may receive tutorials from an outside tutor, and in smaller languages and in linguistics some of the teaching is organised on a departmental basis. Students will normally have one tutorial a week for which they produce an essay (in English) on a given topic, and language classes for each language. In addition, a wide range of lectures will be on offer: these are organised by the University and given by tutors from a variety of colleges. They cover the syllabus but are not compulsory (except for those in the first year). Tutors will advise undergraduates concerning which lectures are likely to prove most beneficial.

The first year

In the European language, the first-year course is intended to consolidate and develop language skills learnt at school and to awaken an interest in areas which may be new. Language work will include intensive study of grammar and vocabulary to lay a firm foundation for the remainder of the course and there will be particular emphasis on developing reading and writing skills. Tutorial work and lectures will introduce students to literature and train the skills of critical analysis. In the Middle Eastern language, students receive intensive language instruction and take introductory courses in the culture of the relevant country or region. The examinations at the end of the first year comprise three 'papers' in the European language and two in the Middle Eastern language. In addition, there is an oral examination for Arabic.

The year abroad

The EMEL course is a four-year course, including a compulsory year abroad in the second year. You will normally spend the second academic year at an approved course of study in the Middle East, and you are strongly advised to spend the adjacent summers where the European language of your choice is spoken. There are arrangements in place with partner universities to help you make the most of your time abroad.

The College has an exchange scheme with the University of Trier, which accommodates one student a year. All undergraduate members of the College are eligible to apply for this exchange.

The third and fourth years

Students can design a course chosen from a wide range of options to suit their interests. Oxford is one of the few British universities at which it is possible to explore foreign literature right back to medieval times; on the other hand students are also able to concentrate on modern literature. Options in linguistics permit students to treat the language from an academic angle as an object of study, complementing the development of practical language skills. Language work is intended to foster an accurate and sophisticated use of the language both orally and in writing, and good reading skills. Four papers are taken in each language, plus an oral examination in each language (except Hebrew) consisting of an oral discourse, conversation and a listening comprehension exercise. Students are also required to complete an Extended Essay, which is intended to form a 'bridge' between the European and Middle Eastern sides of the course.

e.g. a comparison between the work of certain authors writing in the two languages, or a study in the comparative linguistics of the two languages.

Joint Schools

European and Middle Eastern Languages is a Joint Schools course.

You may also combine one European language with another subject as follows:

- Classics & Modern Languages
- English & Modern Languages
- History & Modern Languages
- Modern Languages & Linguistics
- Philosophy & Modern Languages

Please note that Jesus College does **not** offer Single Honours Courses in any of the Middle Eastern Languages (which come under the 'Oriental Studies' course options).

Admissions

In a total College entry of about 100 undergraduates, 9 or 10 will typically be studying Modern Languages and its Joint Schools. Candidates are selected on the basis of academic record (e.g. GCSEs) and potential, as shown by their UCAS reference, submitted written work, performance in written tests and in interviews if shortlisted.

Academic requirements: Candidates are not expected to have previous knowledge of a Middle Eastern language, but will normally have studied the chosen European language to A-level standard. Offers made to candidates will be conditional upon A-level results (normally AAA, with an A in the European language, if currently studied).

Written work: Candidates are required to submit two marked pieces of recent school or college work: one piece written in the European language applied for (if currently studied), plus one piece written in English (perhaps on literature, or history, or some other subject you are studying at school or college) to show how you construct an argument and express your ideas in English. Additionally, if you have studied the Middle Eastern language applied for, you should submit a piece in this language too. The deadline to submit written work is **10 November 2020**. Further information can be viewed here: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/guide/written-work>

Written test: All candidates will need to take the **Modern Languages Admissions Test (MLAT)** and the **Oriental Languages Aptitude Test (OLAT)** in schools or test centres on **4 November 2020**. The tests are administered by Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing, and the registration deadline is **15 October 2020**. Further details of these tests can be found at:

- MLAT - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/tests/mlat>
- OLAT - <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/tests/olat>

Interviews: The interview for the European language will last approximately 30 minutes and will be mainly in English, but it will include a brief conversation in the language offered if studied to A2 level. We aim to encourage candidates to do themselves justice at interview, and we will ask them about their course rather than expect them to have done a certain type of course. We expect candidates to be motivated to do a course with a focus on literature, but do not assume that they will have studied literature formally. Interviews for the Middle Eastern language are arranged by the Oriental Institute.

Deferred Entry: Applications for deferred entry to Jesus College are accepted. You must apply for deferred entry at the time of application to Oxford: you cannot change your mind after an offer has been made. Please refer to departmental web sites for subject-specific advice. You should be aware that applicants who are offered places for deferred entry will generally be among the strongest of the cohort for their subject. We would not usually offer more than one deferred place per subject in order not to disadvantage the following year's candidates. In some cases, an applicant for deferred entry may be offered a place for non-deferred entry instead. If you require any further advice, please contact the Admissions Officer via admissions.officer@jesus.ox.ac.uk

Postgraduate Studies and Careers

Oxford has a large, varied, and active teaching and research community in Modern Languages. There are over ninety members of the Faculty, with research interests spread across the full chronological range of the languages and into most areas of linguistics and literary study. The College welcomes applicants for the following degrees in Medieval and Modern Languages:

- MSt or MPhil Modern Languages
- DPhil Medieval and Modern Languages
- MSt Women's Studies

Beyond the subject-specific aims, the undergraduate course trains students' critical faculties and gives them a wide range of other 'transferable skills'. Students learn to organise their time and cope with working under pressure, and the course provides intensive training in communication skills: weekly essays demand quick assimilation of material and foster writing skills, while discussion in tutorials and classes develops confidence in presenting an independent view clearly and comprehensibly. Oxford graduates in these subjects regularly go into highly competitive areas such as law, finance, commerce, management consultancy, accountancy, the media, advertising, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the arts.

Preliminary Reading and Further Information

Further information about the EMEL course at Oxford can be found at the following websites:

- <http://www.orinst.ox.ac.uk/>
- <http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/> (i.e. for information on the European language elements)

Information about Admissions is available at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses-listing/european-and-middle-eastern-languages>

Contact details

If you have any questions about our entrance requirements, or about applying to study at Jesus College, please contact the Admissions Officer:

Tel: 01865 279721
Email: admissions.officer@jesus.ox.ac.uk
Web: www.jesus.ox.ac.uk/study-here

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