

European Critical Thought

The Certificate Program in European Critical Thought will provide undergraduates from all areas of the University a scaffolded approach to foundational texts in critical theory, as well as its antecedents and legacy. Students will hone skills in analyzing a wide range of complex arguments and modes of expression, including literary and aesthetic idioms, which probe and expose the limits and conditions of possibility for conceptual formations, institutional establishments, disciplinary boundaries, and organizations of power. This certificate program is therefore suited not only to prepare students of literature to analyze the tensions that span lyric poetry and larger social structures, but also to prepare scientists to question, for instance, the social and conceptual presuppositions of the scientific approach to data and knowledge. In this way, our new Certificate Program will affirm the central role of the humanities within the broader context of the University, and it will offer a much-needed complement to the recent investment in other areas of research at Brown, such as the newly established Data Science Institute.

As with all undergraduate certificates (<https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/degree/undergraduatecertificates/>), the certificate has the following requirements:

- Students may not earn more than **one certificate** and may only have **one declared concentration**.
- Students must be enrolled in or have completed at least **two courses** toward the certificate at the time they declare in ASK.
- No more than **one course** may count toward your concentration and the certificate.
- Students may declare in ASK **no earlier** than the beginning of the fifth semester and must declare **no later** than the last day of classes of the antepenultimate (typically the sixth) semester, in order to facilitate planning for the capstone or other experiential learning opportunity.

Excluded Concentrations: German Studies.

Students will be required to complete four courses, including:

At least one of two course offerings on an Introduction to German Critical Thought 1

GRMN 1000A Introduction to German Critical Thought (Kant to Freud) (test)

GRMN 1000B Introduction to German Critical Thought II

At least one of the 1000-level courses offered in German Studies with the designation "Special Topics in Critical Thought" (STICT), which will be focused on different topics each year. 1

GRMN 1XXX

Two additional courses, to be chosen in consultation with the Director of the program. Examples of possible electives include: 2

COLT 0810G Equity Law Literature Philosophy

COLT 1210 Introduction to the Theory of Literature

COLT 1430I Poetry of Europe: Montale, Celan, Hill

COLT 1440U The Listener (Literature, Theory, Film)

COLT 1610B Irony

COLT 1810N Freud: Writer and Reader

COLT 1813Q Literature and Judgement

COLT 1814U Politics of Reading

ENGL 1760U American Modernism and its Aftermaths

ENGL 1761Q W. G. Sebald and Some Interlocutors

FREN 1140A French Theory

GRMN 1200H Writers in Exile: Addressing Fascism in America

GRMN 1661P Marx, Nietzsche, Freud: The World Is Not What You Think

HMAN 1974L The Coming Apocalypse: Between the Earth and the World

HMAN 1975S Figures of the Sovereign: Concepts and Stories from the Life of Power

PHIL 1230 Kant: The Critique of Pure Reason

Experiential Learning

Critical theory profoundly challenges the distinctions between theory and practice, experience, and cognition. For this reason, the "experiential" component of the program will be fulfilled in a manner that highlights the unique and profound interventions that thinking can make.

1. Critical Theory Colloquium: Students will be required to participate in four sessions of the Critical Theory Colloquium, a three-hour forum for the intensive discussion of primary texts and recent research in critical theory that will be held at least once per semester. A faculty member from the Department of German Studies, sometimes in collaboration with an invited guest, will design and facilitate each session. Readings will be made available to participants no later than two weeks in advance of each session, so as to allow each participant ample time to prepare. A Zoom option will always be available for those students who are unable to attend the colloquium in person.

This colloquium series will ensure that all students enrolled in the certificate program, regardless of whether they are enrolled in the same classes, will have the opportunity to convene once per semester and engage collaboratively with pathbreaking studies in critical theory. Since the Critical Theory Colloquium will be open to all interested members of the Brown community, it will also add a public dimension to the students' learning experience, while serving as a community-building institution beyond the certificate program.

The final session of the Critical Theory Colloquium each year will include public presentations of research on the parts of those students who are completing the certificate program. (See below, nr. 3.)

2. Research in Critical Theory:

a. Capstone Project: Students may fulfill the research component of the experiential learning requirement by completing an Honors Thesis for their declared concentration that engages substantively with critical theory. Proposals for these will be reviewed and approved by the Director of the certificate program.

b. Graduate Seminar: Upon receiving approval from the Director of the certificate program, students may also fulfill the research component of the experiential learning requirement by successfully completing a graduate seminar that entails extensive engagement with critical theory.

3. Public Presentation: All students completing the certificate program will be expected to present their research at the final meeting of the Critical Theory Colloquium for the academic year.