



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The major in European cultural studies emphasizes interdisciplinary study of European literature. It is a literature major, but the student also will select nonliterary courses to complement the study of literature. For example, if you are interested in Romanticism, you may want to take English courses in the Romantic poets, a music course on Wagner, a history course on the French Revolution and a philosophy course on Kant or Nietzsche. All will count toward the ECS major. You customize your own curriculum, selecting only the courses relevant to your interests and needs.

What makes the program distinctive?

European cultural studies is one of Brandeis' many interdepartmental programs, which means the major draws from faculty and resources across the university. The major maximizes student flexibility in

choice of courses. The student is not locked into a single department but is able to select courses from a wide variety of offerings cutting across departments and disciplines.

FAST FACTS

Number of faculty: 14

Can you minor in this program? No

Emphasis within the major: interdisciplinary study

Popular second majors: German studies

Website: brandeis.edu/programs/ecs

ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

Course offerings

Recent courses in the ECS major include “Dickens and Dostoevsky”; “Renaissance Art in Northern Europe”; “Hitler’s Europe in Film”; “Britain in the Later Middle Ages”; “German-Jewish Thought”; “Franz Kafka”; “Reformation Europe (1400–1600)”; “The Destruction of European Jewry”; “Schopenhauer and Nietzsche: Art and Politics”; “Russian Modernism in Culture and Arts”; “London from Restoration to Regency: People, Culture, City”; and “Eros: Love, Desire and Identity in Ancient Greece.”

The Center for German and European Studies

Professor Sabine von Mering directs the German Center at Brandeis. A frequent collaborator with ECS, the center hosts lectures from visiting scholars and offers students a variety of opportunities, including travel and research grants.

The Mandel Center for the Humanities

This exciting new center offers interdisciplinary undergraduate courses that attract students from all majors in the humanities and beyond. The center also hosts special local, national and international conferences and events.

Unique curriculum

David Kaufman '03 writes, “I thought the ECS major was terrific for a couple of reasons. Structurally, it really promoted an interdisciplinary approach to its area. For example, as an ECS student I took courses in the literature, music, history and Near Eastern and Judaic studies departments that counted toward completing the major. At the same time, there was a general body of literary and philosophical texts that all ECS students, whatever their other interests, became familiar with through the program, so that despite taking courses in a wide variety of departments I still felt that the program had a distinct shape. Also, the core faculty of ECS is fantastic and extremely devoted to teaching.” David is currently a Ph.D. student in classics at Princeton University.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Study abroad

ECS majors are encouraged to spend a summer or semester studying in another

country. Barcelona, Edinburgh, Freie Universität Berlin, Oxford, and the University of Freiburg have been favorite choices in the past.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Senior thesis

ECS majors may pursue honors by writing an essay or thesis in the senior year. Departmental honors are awarded on the basis of excellence in all courses applied to the major as well as the essay or thesis.

AFTER BRANDEIS

Career preparation

ECS major Sarah Brin '07 writes, “The faculty feedback and encouragement I received as an ECS student gave me both the confidence and intellectual resources to do graduate research in new, challenging and interdisciplinary fields. The program is a uniquely well-rounded humanities program dedicated to building a holistic understanding of the social, political, creative and theoretical factors that comprise cultural production. The interdisciplinary nature of the ECS degree means that its professional application is virtually limitless. Since graduating, I’ve worked in the legal field, in the dot-com industry and in the arts.” Sarah recently earned an M.A. in public arts administration.

“The European cultural studies program at Brandeis is amazing. Through the program I learned to think in a truly interdisciplinary way when solving problems. This approach to problem solving has been extremely beneficial throughout my career. The critical thinking skills I developed in the ECS program helped prepare me for an increasingly global work environment.”

*Judy Abel '02, digital strategist/
account planner*



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