

NORDIC STUDIES

Kelly Roehl, Tomson Hall 331
507-786-3230
roehl1@stolaf.edu
wp.stolaf.edu/norwegian/nordic-studies-concentration/

The Nordic studies program enables students who enter St. Olaf with advanced competence in Norwegian (or another Nordic language) or those who wish a more interdisciplinary approach than that offered by the Norwegian major an opportunity to pursue their interest in Nordic language, culture, and society.

Overview of the Major

The Nordic studies major at St. Olaf College is designed to meet the needs of students who wish to pursue both advanced proficiency in the Norwegian language and an interdisciplinary understanding of the Nordic region. Students complete foundational courses in Norwegian language before pursuing advanced proficiency. In addition, students take a variety of courses on Nordic language, culture, and society from a variety of departments and/or disciplinary perspectives, including at least one course that explores diversity, inequity, and social justice in the Nordic context. Students also have many opportunities to complete coursework through study and/or internship opportunities in one or more Nordic countries. Finally, students participate in an upper-level research seminar in which they design and complete a research project that explores an academic question about Nordic language, culture, or society through an interdisciplinary lens. Students wanting to complete both the Nordic Studies and the Norwegian majors must complete a minimum of 10 credits beyond the foundational course requirement.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Major

Overview of the Concentration

The Nordic studies concentration is designed for students who wish to gain an interdisciplinary understanding of the Nordic region, including its languages, cultures, and societies. The Nordic studies concentration provides students with a foundation of Norwegian language knowledge and skills. From there, students undertake coursework that situates Norway within the broader social and cultural region of the Nordic countries. Students compare and contrast the Nordic languages, cultures, and societies and engage critically with the question of what makes the Nordic countries distinctive.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Concentration

Overview of the Sámi and Critical Indigenous Studies Emphasis

The Sámi and Critical Indigenous Studies emphasis is a collaboration between the Norwegian Department, the Nordic Studies program, and the Race and Ethnic Studies program. In addition to courses in these programs, the emphasis includes courses from a variety of other programs to create a space to critically examine indigenous academic knowledge and Nordic colonialism. The emphasis provides an in-depth understanding of the historical experiences, cultural traditions and

innovations, and political status of the Sámi and the interconnections among the Sámi and other indigenous peoples worldwide.

St. Olaf College stands on the homelands of the Wahpekute Band of the Dakota Nation. We honor with gratitude the people who have stewarded the land throughout the generations and their ongoing contributions to this region. We acknowledge the ongoing injustices that we have committed against the Dakota Nation, and we wish to interrupt this legacy, beginning with acts of healing and honest storytelling about this place.

The emphasis consists of four total courses: two required foundational courses and two electives. Note that RACE 252 cannot be used for the Norwegian major.

Special Programs

The Norwegian Department sponsors many speakers and activities relevant to the Nordic studies concentration such as the annual Christmas service and Seventeenth of May celebration and provides students with the opportunity to live in a language house with a native speaker assistant. The Norwegian-American Historical Association, a rich source of information on Norwegian immigration, is housed in Rølvaag Memorial Library. Many students choose to study in a Nordic country on a variety of programs such as the Oslo International Summer School and the St. Olaf-sponsored programs in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. Norwegian professors also participate in the Language Across the Curriculum (LAC) program, collaborating with disciplinary professors to offer students the opportunity to use their world language skills in selected courses in other departments.

Requirements

Requirements for the Major

Code	Title	Credits
Foundational Courses (in Norwegian)		
NORW 111	Beginning Norwegian I	1.00
NORW 112	Beginning Norwegian II	1.00
NORW 231	Intermediate Norwegian I	1.00
NORW 232	Intermediate Norwegian II	1.00
One (1) additional level II or level III course taught partially or fully in Norwegian (must total at least 0.5 credit)		0.5-1.00
NORST 277	Islamic Communities in Scandinavia (LAC .25 credit)	
NORW 205	Nature in Nordic Literature and Culture (Taught in English) (LAC .25 credit)	
NORW 244	The Sámi: Traditions in Transition (Taught in English) (LAC .25 credit)	
NORW 296	Oslo, Norway Internship Reflection Seminar	
NORW 371	Norwegian Literature: An Overview	
NORW 372	Topics in Norwegian Literature/Culture	
NORW 373	Topics in Norwegian Literature/Culture	

Study abroad or away courses: grammar course, Nynorsk course (ISS)	
Cultural and Historical Perspectives (in English)	
One (1) course that critically examines questions of Nordic diversity, inequity, and social justice	
NORST 100	Nordic Values: From Origins to Obstacles
ENVST 283	Topics in Environmental Studies ("Arctic Journeys: Literature of the North" only)
NORST 264	Nordic Explorations of Sexualities and Genders
NORST 277	Islamic Communities in Scandinavia
NORW 224	Topics in Contemporary Nordic Lit: Window on Society (Taught in English)
NORW 244	The Sámi: Traditions in Transition (Taught in English)
NORW 280	Nordic Mythology and Christianization (Taught in English)
PSYCH 232	Gender Equality in Norway (study abroad)
One (1) course that examines the Nordic languages from a comparative perspective	
NORW 260	Introduction to Germanic Linguistics (Taught in English) (additional courses coming soon)
Two (2) additional courses selected from those listed above; students may also select from the following:	
GERM 247	Germanic Fairy Tales (Taught in English)
HIST 211	Vikings: Past and Present
HIST 271	In their own words: Literature by Immigrants in Minnesota
NORST 219	Transdisciplinary Topics in Nordic Studies
NORST 280	Nordic Film Directors
NORST 396	Directed Undergraduate Research
NORST 398	Independent Research
NORW 260	Introduction to Germanic Linguistics (Taught in English)
NORW 396	Directed Undergraduate Research
NORW 398	Independent Research
PHIL 233	Kierkegaard and Existentialism
REL 238	Tolkien and Theology
MUSPF 118	Hardanger Fiddle
Advanced Course (in English)	
One (1) Level III Research Course	
NORST 396	Directed Undergraduate Research

NORST 398	Independent Research
NORW 396	Directed Undergraduate Research
NORW 398	Independent Research
Total Credits	
9.5-10	

Please note: Students completing both the Norwegian and the Nordic Studies Major must have at least 15 total courses. In the case of a student who tests out of the foundational courses, 11 courses are required.

***Up to three credits** from study abroad or away may be counted toward the major at discretion of program director.

**By completing this major, the student also satisfies the OLE Core Writing in the Major requirement.*

Requirements for the Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
Foundational courses (in Norwegian):		3
NORW 111	Beginning Norwegian I	
NORW 112	Beginning Norwegian II	
NORW 231	Intermediate Norwegian I	
Intermediate Course (in Norwegian):		
One (1) additional level II or level III course taught partially or fully in Norwegian (must total at least 0.5 credit):		0.5-1.00
NORW 232	Intermediate Norwegian II	
NORW 296	Oslo, Norway Internship Reflection Seminar	
NORW 205	Nature in Nordic Literature and Culture (Taught in English) (LAC)	
NORW 244	The Sámi: Traditions in Transition (Taught in English) (LAC)	
NORST 277	Islamic Communities in Scandinavia (LAC)	
NORW 371	Norwegian Literature: An Overview	
NORW 372	Topics in Norwegian Literature/Culture	
NORW 373	Topics in Norwegian Literature/Culture	
Study abroad or away courses: grammar course, Nynorsk course (ISS)		
Cultural and Historical Perspectives (in English)		
One (1) course that critically examines questions of Nordic diversity, inequity, and social justice:		1.00
ENVST 283	Topics in Environmental Studies (When topic is 'Journeys: Lit of the North')	
LNGST 301	Germanic Multiethnolects-A Story of Birth	
NORST 264	Nordic Explorations of Sexualities and Genders	

NORST 277	Islamic Communities in Scandinavia
NORW 224	Topics in Contemporary Nordic Lit: Window on Society (Taught in English)
NORW 244	The Sámi: Traditions in Transition (Taught in English)
NORW 280	Nordic Mythology and Christianization (Taught in English)
PSYCH 232	Gender Equality in Norway (study abroad)

Three (3) additional courses selected from those listed above; students may also select from the following: **3.00**

GERM 247	Germanic Fairy Tales (Taught in English)
HIST 211	Vikings: Past and Present
HIST 271	In their own words: Literature by Immigrants in Minnesota
MUSPF 118	Hardanger Fiddle
NORST 100	Nordic Values: From Origins to Obstacles
NORST 219	Transdisciplinary Topics in Nordic Studies
NORST 280	Nordic Film Directors
NORST 396	Directed Undergraduate Research
NORST 398	Independent Research
NORW 260	Introduction to Germanic Linguistics (Taught in English)
NORW 396	Directed Undergraduate Research
NORW 398	Independent Research
PHIL 233	Kierkegaard and Existentialism
REL 238	Tolkien and Theology

Total Credits **7.5-8**

***Please note:** Students are not allowed to combine the Nordic Studies major with the Nordic studies concentration. If a student double majors in Norwegian and Nordic studies they may also add the Sámi and Critical Indigenous Studies emphasis. Students are not allowed to count the emphasis in Sámi and Critical Indigenous Studies twice (once for the Norwegian major and once for the Nordic Studies major).

Requirements for the Sámi and Critical Indigenous Studies Emphasis

The emphasis consists of four total courses: two required foundational courses and two electives. Note that RACE 252 cannot be used for the Norwegian major.

Code	Title	Credits
Foundational courses		
NORW 244	The Sámi: Traditions in Transition	1.00
RACE 252	Topical Seminar (Theories of Race, Ethnicity, and Indigeneity)	1.00

Elective courses (minimum of two) **2.00**

To count towards the emphasis, students must have a project/paper connected to Norwegian/Nordic colonialism.

ENVST 283	Topics in Environmental Studies (Arctic Journeys: Literature of the North)
NORW 205	Nature in Nordic Literature and Culture
NORW 372	Topics in Norwegian Literature/Culture (taught in Norwegian; counts if topic is relevant)
MUSIC 141	Introduction to Musicology
MUSIC 245	Music and Social Justice
MUSIC 237	Local and Global Musicking
SOAN 233	A Sociology of Colonialism and Postcolonialism

Study abroad courses from DIS-Copenhagen; Postcolonial Europe: Narrative, Nationalism, and Race; and Arctic Geopolitics

Total Credits **4**

Courses

NORST 100: *Nordic Values: From Origins to Obstacles*

The Nordic countries consistently top the list of the best places in the world to live, but what values have supported this outcome? This course examines three core Nordic values--equality, social solidarity, and sustainability--in light of Lutheran and secular traditions. Students examine texts that reflect how these core Nordic values developed and the current challenges facing them. Offered annually. Counts towards the Norwegian and Nordic Studies majors and the Nordic Studies concentration.

NORST 219: *Transdisciplinary Topics in Nordic Studies*

Students explore an interdisciplinary topic in language, literature, history, or culture through close reading, discussion, analysis, and interpretation of selected works, including theoretical texts. Recent topics include: Peace and non-violence from a Nordic Perspective, The Immigrant Experience: From Nordic to Contemporary Immigration to Minnesota, Nordic-American heritage, Social Welfare in the Nordic context. Taught in English. May be repeated if topics are different. Offered periodically. Some topics may count toward Norwegian major.

NORST 264: *Nordic Explorations of Sexualities and Genders*

This course examines how women writers from the Nordic region represent gendered identities and sexualities. Using a variety of texts from the nineteenth century to today, students learn how authors have challenged the socio-political role of women over time. Additionally, students investigate how authors make use of different literary genres such as dystopian writing, crime fiction, magical realism, or sci-fi to shine a light on gendered identities in society. Offered alternate years during the spring semester. Also counts toward Norwegian and gender and sexuality studies majors and gender and sexuality studies concentration.

Prerequisite: WRIT 120 or equivalent.

NORST 277: Islamic Communities in Scandinavia

This course investigates intersections of faith, culture, and politics in Scandinavian and Islamic communities. Students study early encounters between Islamic and Nordic societies and the history of migration to Norway, Denmark, and Sweden from traditionally Islamic countries. Students will examine the cultural challenges faced by Muslims, in particular women, media representations of the Muslim community in politics and society, and extreme reactions that have arisen in the face of multi-religious communities in Scandinavia. Offered alternate years. Also counts toward Norwegian major.

NORST 280: Nordic Film Directors

Numerous Nordic film directors have been celebrated around the world for their important contributions to the art of cinema. In this course students both survey Nordic cinema through chosen examples of such celebrated directors, while also scrutinizing the idea of the film author itself. It asks students to consider what it is about these particular filmmakers that make them special and different from both mainstream and non-Nordic ones. Offered periodically.

NORST 294: Academic Internship

NORST 298: Independent Study

NORST 394: Academic Internship

NORST 396: Directed Undergraduate Research

This course provides a comprehensive research opportunity, including an introduction to relevant background material, technical instruction, identification of a meaningful project, and data collection. The topic is determined by the faculty member in charge of the course and may relate to their research interests. Offered based on department decision. May be offered as a 1.00 credit course or .50 credit course.

Prerequisite: determined by individual instructor.

NORST 398: Independent Research

Examples of Courses from Outside the Nordic Studies Program

ENVST 283 Topics in Environmental Studies

GERM 247 Germanic Fairy Tales (Taught in English)

HIST 188 Topical Seminar(when topic is related to Scandinavia/Arctic Passages)

HIST 211 Vikings: Past and Present

HIST 225 The Journey North: Migrations To, From, & Within Norway (study abroad)

HIST 271 In their own words: Literature by Immigrants in Minnesota

NORW 205 Nature in Nordic Literature and Culture (Taught in English)

NORW 224 Topics in Contemporary Nordic Lit: Window on Society (Taught in English)

NORW 244 The Sámi: Traditions in Transition (Taught in English)

NORW 260 Introduction to Germanic Linguistics (Taught in English)

NORW 280 Nordic Mythology and Christianization (Taught in English)

NORW 373 Topics in Norwegian Literature/Culture

PHIL 233 Kierkegaard and Existentialism

PHIL 266 Kierkegaard in Copenhagen (study abroad)

PSYCH 232 Gender Equality in Norway (study abroad)

Plan of Study
Nordic Studies Major - Plan of Study

This is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements for this major at St. Olaf. This tool is meant as a guide and does not replace working closely with the student's academic advisor.

All students with prior experience in Norwegian learning experience must complete the **online placement exam** in early Summer before their first year to determine which level they should begin.

Course	Title	Credits
First Year		
Fall Semester		
FYS 120 or WRIT 120	First-Year Seminar (or Conversation Program) or Writing and Rhetoric	1.00
NORW 111	Beginning Norwegian I ¹	1.00
Credits		2
January Term		
NORW 112	Beginning Norwegian II	1.00
Credits		1
Spring Semester		
WRIT 120 or FYS 120	Writing and Rhetoric (or Conversation Program) or First-Year Seminar	1.00
NORW 112 or NORW 231	Beginning Norwegian II (if not already taken in J-Term) or Intermediate Norwegian I	1.00
Credits		2
Sophomore Year		
Fall Semester		
NORW 231	Intermediate Norwegian I	1.00
Credits		1
Spring Semester		
NORW 232	Intermediate Norwegian II	1.00
Credits		1
Junior Year		
Fall Semester		
NORW 260	Introduction to Germanic Linguistics (Taught in English)	1.00
Credits		1
Total Credits		8

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*Assumes that the individual has no prior experience in Norwegian; higher coursework can be taken if prerequisites are met. Students with previous Norwegian learning experience must take the online placement exam to determine in which class level they should begin.

Students must successfully complete the equivalent of 35 St. Olaf credits through a combination of full-credit and fractional-credit courses to earn the Bachelor of Arts.

Visit the Nordic Studies department webpage for more information.

Faculty

Program Director , 2024-2025

Kari Lie Dorer

Professor of Norwegian and Race, Ethnic, Gender and Sexuality Studies, King Olav V Chair of Scandinavian-American Studies
Norwegian language and culture; applied linguistics; Sami studies; Nordic film

Jenna M. Coughlin

Assistant Professor of Norwegian
Norwegian language and culture; Nordic literature and media; ecocriticism; gender studies

Andrew (Andy) Meyer

Visiting Assistant Professor of Norwegian

Tanya Thresher

Associate Professor of Norwegian
Norwegian language and culture; gender studies, Nordic theater and film, Ibsen, Nordic multiculturalism