

FACULTY PROFILE



Prof. Jennifer Bjornstad, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of German

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Biography

EDUCATION

BA: St. Olaf College (German and English Education)

MA and PhD: University of Wisconsin-Madison (German)

LINKS

[Professor Bjornstad's cv](#)

[Professor Bjornstad's website](#)

[Professor Bjornstad's blog](#)

Professor Bjornstad joined the VU faculty in 2001. She teaches the full range of German courses, from German 101 through the Senior Seminar; she especially enjoys figuring out new ways to help her students increase their language proficiency: "I love it when I hit on a classroom activity or homework assignment that really helps students make quick progress toward their language-learning goals."

Professor Bjornstad's research interests include 20th century German prose fiction and the teaching of German. She is especially interested in texts with multiple endings, sets of texts that are versions of a single story, and texts that explore important ethical issues. She is an avid reader in both German and English and loves to watch film versions of her favorite books.

In December, Professor Bjornstad invites students to her home for a

Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures - Valparaiso University
Cookie-Decorating Party. In 2009, a student made her favorite cookie ever: "One student took a gingerbread boy and gave it bright red hair. I knew right away that it was Lola from the film *Lola rennt!*" Professor Bjornstad is married; she and her husband have a son in high school. Each June, the family travels to Governor Dodge State Park in Wisconsin for a two-week camping trip. When she's not teaching, Professor Bjornstad loves to hike, work in the vegetable garden, sing, bake cookies, and play board games.

Time Abroad:

- Junior Semester Abroad in Paderborn, 1989
- Fulbright Teaching Year in Recklinghausen, 1991-1992
- Business German Workshop in Düsseldorf, 2001
- Trips with the Valparaiso Chorale, 2004, 2007

Languages:

- English: native
- German: Ph.D.
- Dutch: 4 semesters
- Spanish: un poco
- French: working on this one!
- Chinese: 30 minutes of Rosetta Stone

Favorite Authors: Jane Austen, Heinrich Böll, Jurek Becker, Ray Bradbury

Favorite Books: any poetry collection by Billy Collins

Favorite Films: *Lola rennt*, *The Jungle Book*

Favorite Musical Group: Simon & Garfunkel

Favorite Words: "vicarious," "serendipitous," "Hauptbahnhof"

Favorite Dessert: chocolate raspberry cheesecake

