

Please note: this is a preliminary version of this syllabus, which may be subject to change

The University of Toronto

Contemporary German Culture and Media

GER310HS / Winter 2016

Instructor: **Anna Stainton**

Dept: **German**

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Hours: **tba**

Class meets **Tuesday, 2-4 p.m. in Room CR 406**

DESCRIPTION

Contemporary German culture encompasses many ideas of what it means to be German. What is the reality of Germany today? What could Germany (have) become? Such questions occupy Germany's contemporary authors, filmmakers, journalists, and artists, as Germans and the world seek ways to reconcile Germany's past with its present as a global leader and as a multicultural society. This course provides an introduction to contemporary German culture through its various media—prose, cinema, poetry, music, print and viral media—focussing particularly on German cultural artefacts produced within the last decade. Sessions will be structured around interactive lectures, class discussions, and group work, and will be taught in German.

By the end of the course, students will have developed an overview of current issues and themes within the German cultural landscape. Students will also have examined various forms of media in-depth, and analysed them from a socio-cultural perspective, by completing homework journals, short response papers, and a final paper, alongside participating in class.

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Active Class Participation	10%
Journals	10%
Short Response Papers (4 in total)	25%
Presentation	15%
Final Paper Outline	10%
Final Paper	30%

MATERIALS

Books:

- Brussig, Thomas. *Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm: Roman*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2015. (excerpts)
- Erpenbeck, Jenny. *Heimsuchung: Roman*. München: btb, 2010. (excerpts)
- Kammerer, Wladimir. *Liebesgrüße aus Deutschland*. München: Goldmann Verlag, 2013. (excerpts)
- Zeh, Juli – *Corpus Delicti: ein Prozess*. Frankfurt am Main: Schöffling, 2010. (excerpts)

Films: (will be available via Course Reserve)

- *Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland* (dir. Yasemin Şamdereli, 2011)
- *Oh Boy!* (dir. Jan Ole Gerster, 2012)
- *Die Welle* (dir. Dennis Gansel, 2008)
- *Freiland* (dir. Moritz Laube, 2014)

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY, AND PARTICIPATION

The Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures allows each student a maximum of two unexcused absences (i.e. two 50 minute absences) per semester. For each subsequent unexcused absence, you will incur a 5% penalty off the class participation and attendance grade of the course. Lateness may be counted towards unexcused absences. An excused absence is defined as one that has been validated in writing by a physician, clinic, or a person of authority, e.g. college registrar. Absenteeism inherently has indirect bearing upon all other aspects of the grade weighting. Test material and homework assignments are based on tasks, activities and information integrated into class time instruction. After absences have been taken into account, you will also be graded on participation. Active participation is a requirement of the course.

Film screenings will take place either on Wednesday, Thursdays, or Fridays from 10-12am (we will vote on the best time in class), but are not mandatory to attend. If you are unable to attend a film screening, it is your responsibility to arrange to watch the film at another time, so that you are prepared to discuss it in class.

Written assignments which are handed in late with no prior arrangement for an extension will incur a 5% penalty per day late.

JOURNALS

Each week (aside from week 1), you will be required to post answers to 5 short answer questions (1-2 sentences) on that week's reading or film screening to your course journal on Blackboard, by 11.59am each Thursday. These questions will aid you in preparing and

reading for each class. You may miss one journal without penalty. Journals will be graded with 0 (not completed) or 1 (completed).

SHORT RESPONSE PAPERS

During the course of the semester, you will write a total of 4 short response papers (300-400 words) on the texts or films we are covering. Of the four films and four longer texts, you may write on any four in total, but must write on at least one film and at least one text. The response papers will be based on prompt questions, which will be posted to Blackboard two weeks prior to the discussion of the text or film. Each response paper must be handed in during the class in which the discussion of that text or film will take place, and will be returned the following week. You must have handed in at least two response papers by week 6.

PRESENTATION

For Week 12 of the course, you will form groups of 3-4. Within your group, you will each select a short/small cultural artefact (text, video, object...). As a group, you will then put together a presentation to explain your choices to the class. Through your choices of artefacts and explanatory presentation, you will synthesise your ideas on the different aspects of German culture discussed in the course, focusing particularly on your personal understanding of German culture. Your group presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes and each person should speak for roughly the same amount of time. Your presentations will form part of a classroom exhibition entitled 'Unser Deutschland'. As a group, you will be assessed on your choices of artefact, your demonstration of an overall understanding of the aspects of German culture covered in the course through your presentation; individually, you will be assessed on your presentation skills. The objective of this assignment is for you to examine the course material through an overview perspective, rather than looking at individual texts in depth as you will do in the final paper and short response papers.

FINAL PAPER

The final paper will be a 900-1100 word essay on one or more of the texts, films, or concepts discussed in the course. Essay questions will be posted to Blackboard, or you may choose your own essay topic, which must be approved by the instructor. You will be assessed on the final paper itself (due Week 12) as well as on an outline of your paper (due Week 9, will be returned Week 10). The outline should be in bullet point or visual form, should show primary and secondary sources, and should demonstrate the planned structure of your argument. Further guidance on the outline and the final paper itself will be provided in class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Academic integrity is defined as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, using online translators, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

DISABILITY ACCESS

The department encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by university policy or by provincial or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell your instructor or visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Zeitplan des Kurses

Woche 1 – Einführungswoche

1. Bilder deutscher Realitäten

Woche 2 – Was bedeutet es, heute “Deutsch” zu sein?

Woche 3 – Deutschland von außen betrachtet (Text: *Liebesgrüße aus Deutschland*)

Filmvorstellung: *Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland* (dir. Yasemin Şamdereli, 2011)

Woche 4 – Deutschland als multikulturelle Gesellschaft (Film: *Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland*)

Woche 5 – Deutschland von innen betrachtet (Text: *Heimsuchung*)

Filmvorstellung: *Oh Boy!* (dir. Jan Ole Gerster, 2012)

Woche 6 – Deutsche “Millenials” und die Berliner Gegenwart/Zukunft (Film: *Oh Boy!*)

Filmvorstellung: *Die Welle* (dir. Dennis Gansel, 2008)

Lesewoche

2. Fantasien eines anderen Deutschlands... was wäre wenn?

Woche 7 – Angst vor der Vergangenheit (Film: *Die Welle*)

Woche 8 – Das andere Deutschland – noch heute? (Text: *Das gibt's in keinem Russenfilm*)

Filmvorstellung: *Freiland* (dir. Moritz Laube, 2014)

Woche 9 – Krise und Rezession – andere Wege (Film: *Freiland*)
(Due: *Final Paper Outline*)

Woche 10 – Zukünfte für Deutschland (Text: *Corpus Delicti*)

Woche 11 – Fantasien gegen Realität – Begründungen, Vergleiche

Woche 12 – “Unser Deutschland” – Klassenausstellung
(Due: *Final Paper and Presentation*)