

GERMAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Course Description

GER 150 is a German literature and culture course taught in English and designed for students who want to familiarize themselves with historical and cultural developments which have shaped modern German-speaking Europe. The course focusses on cultural history from the 19th century to the post-unification era of the 21st century. While emphasizing the broad development of German civilization since ca. 1750, the curriculum focusses particularly on more recent German popular and high culture, including examples from literature, social history, art, music, and modern media. Drawing on thought-provoking texts and visual artifacts, GER 150 offers a diverse view of life in German-speaking Europe based on selections from literary and historical works, commentaries, and interdisciplinary materials which highlight important cultural movements.

Course Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to introduce major themes in the history of German culture and civilization while enhancing students' analytic and interpretive skills through engagement with representative artifacts of German culture.

Course Requirements

- Your regular and punctual attendance is expected at every course session. More than 1 unexcused absence will negatively affect your participation grade. To that effect, your well-informed participation is expected during those parts of course sessions devoted to questions and discussion. To be a well-informed participant, you will need to come to class having read the assigned texts. *Finally, late work will not be accepted under any circumstances without an officially recognized excuse.*
- In the 2nd week, there will be a test based on the 1st half of the Fulbrook book, made up of short answer, multiple choice and fill-in-the blanks concerning significant dates and events in German history.
- In the 2nd week, you will also be given a list of essay topics. You are expected to produce an annotated bibliography for your essay topic, where you provide me with a minimum of three non-online sources, properly cited, and a brief summary of each source. (DUE TUESDAY JUNE 5)
- You will write a mid-term exam consisting of the last half of the Fulbrook book (1815-present) as well as one or two longer essay responses to questions that emerge from our readings and discussions during the 1st half of the course.

- You will write a short paper (1000-1200 words, double spaced) based on your previously chosen topic. (DUE THURSDAY JUNE 19)
- You will write a Final Exam at the end of the course, between June 23-27. The format will be short answer and short essay questions. For the Final you will NOT be permitted to use notes or open books; the questions will not be made available in advance.
- The instructor does NOT accept work via email under any circumstances. When you miss class, you are responsible for catching yourself up by consulting your fellow students, NOT by contacting the instructor.

Evaluation of Course Work (Final Grade)

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| Attendance and participation: | 15% |
| Book Test: | 10% |
| Midterm: | 20% |
| Literature Review for paper | 5% |
| Short paper (1200 words) | 15% |
| Final Exam: | 35% |

Required texts

1. Fulbrook, Mary. *A Concise History of Germany*, 2nd Edition. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Please order yourself a copy of the book online. A copy of this book will also be available on Course Reserves at Robarts Library and at Victoria E.J. Pratt Library.

2. A course reader will be available at The Copy Place, 720 Spadina Avenue, Suite 103, ph:416-9612679

Academic Integrity Statement:

Academic Integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with integrity, respect other students' dignity and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed. Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, using translation machines, 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, or tampering with the work of other students. For further information please visit the University of Toronto's Academic Integrity site: www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/

Disability Access:

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Weekly Course Outline

Class I (Tuesday May 13): **What is German Culture?**

- Introduction to course and content
- Discussion of the idea of national culture with reference to post-war German culture
- Overview of key events in 19th century German history.

Class II (Thursday May 15): **Weimar Germany and the Rise of the Nazis, Cinematic Responses to the End of the First World War**

- overview and scenes from Weimar-era films
- Prepared Readings: *From Caligari to Hitler* (Siegfried Kracauer); *Shell Shock Cinema* (Anton Kaes) (Course Reader)

Class III (Tuesday May 20): **Post-War (West) German National Identity**

- Prepared Readings: Theodor Adorno, *The Meaning of Working Through the Past* (Course Reader)
- Paul Celan, *Todesfuge*

Class IV (Thursday May 22): **Differing Responses to the War: The Former DDR and Post-War Austria**

- Book Test (on Fulbrook up to year 1815)
- *Prepared Readings*: Ingeborg Bachmann, *Among Murderers and Madmen* (Course Reader)

Class V (Tuesday May 27): **The State of Minorities in German-speaking Lands in the Wake of WWII**

- *Prepared Reading*: Hans Magnus Enzenberger's, *Am I a German?* (Course Reader)
- The status of Jews and other minorities in German culture
- Screening of a Goethe Institut short documentary on Muslims in Germany

Class VI (Thursday May 29)

- **Mid-Term**
- An overview of the 2nd half of the class and the idea of cultural “products”

Class VII (Tuesday June 3): **German Art and Architecture**

- Screening: Selections from *Berlin Babylon*, dir. Hubertus Siegert and a discussion of German visual art.

Class VIII (Thursday June 5): **German Literature I: Modern Prose and Poetry**

- Franz Kafka, *The Hunger Artist* (course reader)
- Poetry selections

Class IX (Tuesday June 10): **German Literature II: Drama**

- Bertolt Brecht, *Threepenny Opera*

Class X (Thursday June 12): **Popular and Classical Music in German Speaking Countries**

- Overview of German music from Bach to 2nd Viennese school + Stockhausen/Popular music in the 20th/21st century
- Theodor Adorno, *Commodity Music Analysed* (course reader)

Class XI (Tuesday June 17): **German Opera**

- Trace the development of German Opera from Mozart through Wagner to Berg
- Watch some excerpts of recent productions
- Theodor Adorno, *Wagner's Relevance Today* (course reader)

Class XII (Thursday June 19): **German Food, Drink and Sport**

- A screening of the final segment of *Das Wunder von Bern* and the end of the *Marriage of Maria Braun*, and the relationship of sport to national identity through differing perspectives on the 1954 World cup and the role national Football plays in post-WWII German identity.
- An overview/history of German food and drink culture, likely involving samples - perhaps an excursion to a local German-style restaurant or pub.

FINAL EXAM (June 23-27)