

Please note: this is a preliminary version of the syllabus, changes might occur.

The University of Toronto
Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures

German 310H Fall: Contemporary German Culture & Media

Fall 2019, Tuesday 11a.m.-1p.m., place CR 403

Instructor's Contact Information

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Course Description

This course focuses on contemporary German culture as expressed through a variety of media. It approaches Germany and Germany's position within Europe and the world mainly (but not exclusively) through non-literary texts. The leading idea behind this course is to understand contemporary Germany within its historical and cultural contexts.

Our work in class will be shaped by class discussions, group work, and occasional lectures. Assignments and discussions will be in German.

Course Objectives

The primary objectives of this course are to introduce students to major developments in contemporary Germany as they are reflected in German media, to enhance students' ability to analyze and interpret texts, and to improve students' written and spoken German.

Please check Quercus regularly for the most current course information!

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation (15%): Regular attendance is mandatory. Absences will only be excused according to University regulations: for example, religious holidays, serious accidents or illness (medical note required), and serious family circumstances (written documentation required). Please notify me at least a week in advance in case you know you need to miss class.

In addition to excused absences each student may have one (1) unexcused absence. Each unexcused absence after the first will result in a reduction of the final grade. Besides regular attendance, your participation represents a substantial part of your final grade. I expect you to come to class **in time**, having completed all the readings and assignments. **You must bring to class a copy of the assigned text/s.** You are responsible for contributing to and stimulating a meaningful exchange of ideas. You will be graded according to quality and frequency of your participation.

As mentioned above, the class will be conducted in German. However, don't be shy because you think your German is not perfect. It's much better to make mistakes than to say nothing. We will help each other to find the right words and structures!

Discussion forum contributions (5%): You will need to read the assigned texts and to contribute on Quercus' discussion forum in preparation for class. Please make yourself familiar with Quercus, if you do not know the portal yet. I will provide study questions and tasks related to the reading assignments, to which you are expected to refer in your Quercus contribution. You are expected to read your classmates' contributions. Your work on Quercus will help you to practice your written German and to participate in class. Discussion forum contributions will be marked with 0 or 1. As long as your contribution is formulated in German, directly related to the assigned text/task, has the required length and is submitted in time, you will earn 1 point. You can miss one (1) of these assignments without penalties. Discussion forum contributions are due Friday, 5 PM. No late work will be accepted.

Group project presentation (15%): You will give one presentation together with a team (detailed instructions will follow). To make the process as fair as possible, we will decide on who will present when via lottery in the beginning of the semester. You are committed to the assigned date and you cannot change it except for the official reasons mentioned above. The topic of your presentation should be discussed with me at least one week in advance. The presentation will be graded for content as well as presentation skills.

Portfolio (15%): You will document your work on the group presentation in an individual portfolio (detailed instructions will follow). The portfolio is due on the day of your presentation.

In-class essay (25%): You will write one in-class essay. For this essay, you will choose one of three given topics. You will be allowed to use your standard paper dictionary (no electronic devices allowed). Detailed criteria will follow. Check course program for exact date.

Term test (25%): You will write one test. See the course program for exact date.

A note on missed or late work: you can only obtain credit for your work if the absence or delay is related to reasons for excused absences as defined above. Except for emergencies, all excuses for missing an exam or for late assignments must be discussed with me before the exam or due date. Except for emergencies, I will NOT accept excuses given after the exam or due date. An unexcused late assignment or missed exam will result in a zero.

Evaluation of Course Work (Final Grade)

Attendance and participation:	15%
Discussion forum contributions:	5%
Group project presentation:	15%
Portfolio:	15%
In-class essay:	25%
Term test:	25%

Required texts

Texts will be provided in paper or electronic format. **Students are expected to have a copy of the assigned text available in class.**

Selection of German news websites

www.faz.net (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung) – www.spiegel.de (Der Spiegel) –
www.sueddeutsche.de (Sueddeutsche Zeitung) – taz.de (die Tageszeitung) – www.zeit.de (die
Zeit) – <https://www.dw.com/de/themen/s-9077> (Deutsche Welle)

Avoidance of Academic Offenses

Academic integrity is one of the cornerstones of the University of Toronto. It is critically important both to maintain our community which honours the values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility and to protect you, the students within this community, and the value of the degree towards which you are all working so diligently. According to Section B.i. of the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) which all students are expected to know and respect, it is an offence for students knowingly: "(a) to forge or in any other way alter or falsify any document or evidence required by the University, or to utter, circulate or make use of any such forged, altered or falsified document, whether the record be in print or electronic form; (b) to use or possess an unauthorized aid or aids or obtain unauthorized assistance in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work; (c) to personate another person, or to have another person personate, at any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work; (d) to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism [...]; (e) to submit, without knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere; (f) to submit any academic work containing a purported statement of fact or reference to a source which has been concocted" (page 3). Please respect these rules and the values which they protect.

Accessibility Needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for an accessibility need, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible:
accessibility.services@utoronto.ca or <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>.