

The University of Toronto  
**GLOBAL ISSUES / GERMAN CONTEXTS**  
German 290H / Spring 2021

Instructor: **STEFAN SOLDOVIERI** Dept: German  
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Hours: By appointment

**Class meets Mondays, 4-6 Online**



## 1) Overview and Goals

The movement of cultural products, material goods, capital, people, ideas, and information across national borders has resulted in a new quality of global interdependency. The course provides an overview of key concepts in globalization studies and examines the contemporary character of globalization in German-speaking contexts. There is a special focus on the environmental impacts of globalization: We will consider artistic, cultural, technological, and social practices that explore questions of sustainability and a livable future on the planet.

The course is highly recommended as preparation for students interested in participating in the Department's iPRAKTIKUM Internationalization & Experiential Learning internship program – particularly for placements in Germany with futurGenerator/iPRAKTIKUM partners (<http://german.utoronto.ca/ipraktikum/>). The course also fulfills a mandatory requirement for the Global Scholar Certificate (<https://german.utoronto.ca/undergraduate-programs/global-scholar-certificate/>).

By the end of the course, you will:

- have developed an understanding of the history of globalization
- have a deep grasp of the main theoretical issues at play in conceptualizing globalization
- be able to place the case of Germany in the context of global flows and exchanges

## 2) Expectations

As students, you can expect that I will:

- establish and maintain a constructive environment for learning;
- come prepared to every class;
- plan each class to help you achieve the course objectives;
- understand that it is not necessarily your fault if something in the material is unclear;
- provide clear guidelines for assignments;
- offer timely and useful feedback and make myself available outside of class.

As your instructor, I expect that you will:

- take full responsibility for your own learning;
- come on time and prepared to every class;
- complete all work on time with proper thought;
- treat your fellow students and instructor with respect;
- ask questions when something is not clear (asking questions is a sign of maturity and intellectual inquisitiveness, not ignorance);
- contribute to creating a positive learning community by helping others learn.

## 3) Readings & Materials

Course materials will be made available primarily over Quercus. Some video material may require DVD sign-out or streaming. Any books required for this course will be available at the University of Toronto Bookstore.

Excerpts from:

Thomas Hylland Eriksen. *Globalization. The Key Concepts*. Bloomsbury. Second edition. 2016.  
*Introducing global issues*. Eds. Michael T. Snarr and D. Neil Snarr. Holmes and Meier. Boulder, Colorado. Lynne Rienner. 2016.

*From interculturalism to transculturalism: mediating encounters in cosmopolitan contexts*. Ed. Heinz Antor. Heidelberg: Winter, 2010.

*Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*. Eds. Peter L. Berger and Samuel P. Huntington. Oxford UP. 2006.

*Globalization and the Future of German*. Gardt Hüppauf, Ed. Mouton de Gruyter. Berlin/New York, 2004.

*Transnationalism in Contemporary German-Language Literature*. Ed. Elisabeth Herrmann, Carrie Smith-Prei, and Stuart Taberner. Rochester/NY. Camden House. 2015.

Anke S. Biendarra. *Germans Going Global*. De Gruyter. Berlin/Boston. 2012.  
*Climate change and global sustainability: a holistic approach*. Eds. Akimasa Sumi, Nobuo Mimura and Toshihiko Masui. Shibuya-ku, Tokyo/New York. United Nations University Press. 2011.

#### 4) Overview of Course Topics

Mobility	Global Protest
Disembedding	Intercultural Competence
Risk	Narratives of Displacement
Identity Politics	Global Legacies of Fossil Fuels
Speed	
Connections	

#### 5) Evaluation and Marks

	Individual or Group	Mark Weight	Due
<b>Reading Response - Discussion Post</b>	Individual	10%	Fridays for following Monday
<b>In the News - Brief Report</b>	Individual	10%	One per term
<b>Presentation - Poster</b>	Individual	15%	22 February
<b>Digital Story – Recording/Podcast</b>	Group	20%	22 March
<b>Final Creative Assignment or Essay</b>	Individual	30%	12 April
<b>Class Contribution</b>	Individual	15%	Ongoing

##### Reading Response / Quercus Post

Most weeks, as noted in the course plan, you will respond to a posted text or screening using the discussion function in Quercus. You must make your post before class, since the response is intended to facilitate class discussion. You will find the instructions in the Quercus discussion section.

##### In the News

These are short, circa 10-minute reports on Germany-specific news items with a global dimension. The expectation is that presenters relate the topic to the concepts being discussed in the class. Each course participant presents one item of their choice during the term.

##### Poster Presentation

Your task will be to create (PowerPoint slide or other format) and present for the class a poster illustrating a topic of your choosing (with instructor approval). Topics may include: a current social or political issue or project, artwork, film, author, or event. The only requirement is that the topic engages with the general theme of Germany in a globalized world. The presentation is 4-5

minutes and you will receive detailed instructions on how to create an effective poster and successfully complete the assignment.

### Digital Storytelling

The task of the group will be to create a podcast that tells the story of an individual, group, or event that has a German connection and global reach. The recording will be approximately 10 minutes long and guidelines will be provided.

### Final Creative Project or Essay

The final project can either be a creative work or a more traditional academic essay. You must choose a topic related to the concerns of the course and consult with the instructor before beginning work. Detailed instructions will be posted and discussed in class.

### Class contribution

The class contribution component of the grade is intended to encourage active, prepared, and thoughtful discussion. Your specific goals for class contribution are:

- to show that you have not just absorbed the ideas we discuss and texts with which we engage, but reflected on them;
- to show that you are making progress in understanding the different issues in contemporary German culture as they relate to globalization;
- to show that you have the curiosity and ambition to keep learning.

Class contribution will be assessed on several criteria, not just ‘airtime’ in class. To receive good marks, you can do any of the following:

- come to class with an original, thoughtful, insight into the text / topic under discussion for that session;
- contribute an idea from a relevant reading or other source that is \*not\* specifically assigned for the session;
- propose topics or ideas for discussion in class by emailing them to your instructor in advance of class;
- etc...

A detailed rubric for assessing your class contribution is supplied below. It should help clarify expectations. It is your responsibility to consult with your instructor about how you are doing as measured by this rubric. You are required to use your camera during online instruction – sessions will not be recorded.

### Team Expectations / Guidelines

All students are expected to treat teamwork in a serious way and to remain ‘on task’ at all times, ensuring productive ‘academic’ behavior. This means:

- ensuring all team members voice their opinions thoughts and concerns;
- taking personal responsibility for voicing thoughts to benefit the team’s learning;
- contributing to the learning of the team by giving equal time and work quality as others in the group;
- committing to a standard of work and expectations agreed upon by the team; participating in team projects at a level agreed upon by the entire team.

Mark / 15	15-14	13-11	10-7	6-5	<5
<b>Preparatory Contribution</b>					
Relation to Peers	Displays leadership in actively supporting, engaging, and listening to peers (ongoing).	Actively supports, engages, and listens to peers (ongoing).	Makes a sincere effort to interact with peers.	Limited interaction with peers.	No interaction with peers.
Participation	Displays leadership in playing an active role in discussions (ongoing).	Plays an active role in discussions (ongoing).	Participates constructively in discussions (ongoing).	When/where prepared, participates constructively in discussions.	Never participates.
<b>Intellectual Contribution</b>					
Preparation	Arrives fully prepared, having also done additional readings.	Arrives fully prepared.	Arrives mostly, if not fully prepared.	Arrives noticeably less than entirely prepared.	Unprepared.
Quality of Comments	Comments advance the level and depth of the dialogue (consistently).	Comments occasionally advance the level and depth of the dialogue.	Makes relevant comments based on the assigned material (ongoing).	When/where prepared, makes relevant comments based on the assigned material.	Demonstrates a noticeable lack of interest in the material.
<b>Contribution to Learning Community</b>					
Impact on Group Dynamic	Group dynamic and level of discussion are consistently better because of the student's presence.	Group dynamic and level of discussion are often better because of the student's presence.	Group dynamic and level of discussion are occasionally better (and never worse) because of the student's presence.	Group dynamic and level of discussion are not affected by the student's presence.	Group dynamic and level of discussion are harmed (perhaps significantly) by the student's presence.

## **6) A Note on Communicating with Your Professor**

Even in a class with a manageable size like ours, it is sometimes difficult for a professor to anticipate and recognize all of the issues that can arise regarding classroom environment, expectations, teaching style, assignments, and marking. This can be particularly challenging in an online course. It is important that you see your professor during office hours (or schedule a special appointment) to discuss any matters related to the class as soon as they arise. Please don't wait until the end of the term; it is generally more productive for professors and students to meet during the term while there is still opportunity to address any concerns.

Email can be a very efficient means of communicating with your professor. I will make every effort to respond promptly to questions posed in emails. However, please do not expect me to respond instantaneously to emails sent shortly before class, during evening hours, or on weekends. In addition, you may be required to submit some writing assignments in electronic form for correction. This will be most efficient using an email attachment. You are required to use your 'utoronto' email for course correspondence and to check the Quercus site frequently for updates and assignments.

Brain scientists tell us that multi-tasking is a myth for us humans. This means that if you are checking your phone, you are not 100% engaged with the class activity. Cellphones must be put away and silenced during class time.

## **7) 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 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, using online 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 academic work of other students. See for additional information: <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>

## **8) Disability Access**

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