



Hessen: ISU Curricular Outlines
- Minimum requirements-

Was ist Deutschland?
Culture and Communication from 1871 to the present

CLASS HOURS

- Week 1:** Wednesday-Thursday 8:30-11:45; Friday: Excursion to Würzburg; Saturday: Excursion to Weimar
Week 2: Monday- Thursday 8:30-11:45; Tuesday: Trip Berlin
Week 3: Monday-Wednesday 8:30-11:45; Thursday-Saturday: Trip to Berlin

PROFESSOR

Dr. Cynthia Chalupa, Academic Unit Head and Professor of German, Department of World Languages and Cultures, James Madison University, Virginia, USA.

E-mail address: chalupcs@jmu.edu

1) INFORMATION ON THE COURSE CONTENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This seminar is designed to introduce students at all levels of German proficiency to German history and culture from 1871 to the present. The course is centered on questions of German identity as they are addressed in art, literature, film, and historical texts created during the historical period studied. Students will also examine issues of prejudice, stereotypes, and the challenges of intercultural communication. The course will allow students to develop intercultural communication skills through discussions about history, art, and literature and through creative writing activities. Students will also explore culture firsthand through academic excursions both locally and in Berlin that focused on experiential learning.

Students will read texts that explore the meaning of German identity and the history of Germany (both divided and united). The course examines the question "Was ist Deutschland?" Through readings and written assignments, students will attempt to formulate an answer that has both public and personal relevance. Class time will be devoted primarily to the discussion of reading assignments to which students will respond individually, in small groups, and together as a class. In order to maximize work during class, all readings should be done prior to the session during which they are discussed.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- engage in complex conversations about the question of German identity since the establishment of Germany as a nation;
- understand and interpret complex written language on a variety of topics by analyzing, summarizing, and discussing authentic texts;
- present information, concepts, and ideas by participating in group discussions and debates, conducting interviews, and presenting information in a formal format;
- demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives of Germany by identifying and describing important aspects and challenges of Germany and its history;
- reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines and gain insights into German culture by reading and interpreting a variety of texts and examining other cultural products (films, songs, art, media, etc.);

- demonstrate an understanding of German culture by comparing it with their home cultures through the analysis and summarization of authentic texts, films, and cultural practices.

COURSE MATERIALS

Reading texts as well as PowerPoint slides and other materials will be available on the course Moodle site. Always check the Moodle site for homework assignments.

INFORMATION ON GRADING, CLASS PARTICIPATION, ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

COURSE GRADE DISTRIBUTION

50% Participation (see rubric)

50% Exam

ASSIGNMENTS

- Primarily readings or web research assignments with accompanying short-answer questions.

EXAM

- There will be a comprehensive exam at the end of the course. It will take place on the last formal day of instruction.

PROFESSIONALISM & CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class discussion is a vital element of this course; it is also a necessary part of the preparation for the homework tasks that will be assigned. Class participation will be evaluated based on level of participation (using a rubric) and attendance in class. Excellent class participation requires thorough and conscientious preparation outside of class. Working with class material outside of class and actively participating in class will help students develop their ability to express opinions, form questions, and develop interpretations about the material we are studying.

MISSED CLASSES

Because students must be present to participate, frequent absences will negatively affect this portion of their grade. A poor grade in class participation (i.e., many absences) can lower the course grade an entire point.

GRADING SCALE:

Percentage	Description	
A= 90-100%	1.0	very good: an outstanding achievement
	1.3	
B= 80-90%	1.7	good: an achievement substantially above average requirements
	2.0	
	2.3	
C= 70-80%	2.7	satisfactory: an achievement which corresponds to average requirements
	3.0	
	3.3	
D= 60-70%	3.7	sufficient: an achievement which barely meets the requirements
	4.0	
F= 0-60%	5.0	not sufficient / failed: an achievement which does not meet the requirements

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday through Thursday from 8:30 to 11:30 (apart from variations based on schedule)

Weekend excursions, which emphasize a hands-on experience of German culture.

Date	Topic	Assignments/Assessments/ Materials
Week 1		
Wed. 15. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction – What is Germany? - Stereotypes and cultural comparisons 	Reading from course reader
Thurs. 16. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divided Germany – Two German Nations Excursion to Point Alpha 	Reading from course reader Web research and questions
Fri. 17. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential Learning Module: Würzburg and the region of Franconia, Bavaria 	Field trip to Würzburg
Sat. 18. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential learning module: Weimar, the city of culture and the Buchenwald concentration camp 	Field trip to Weimar
Week 2		
Mon. 20. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Germany after WWII – The Stunde Null and reconstruction 	Reading from course reader Questions from reader Work on presentations
Tues. 21. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Berlin Airlift and heightened tensions; beginning of the Cold War Life in West Germany, art and literature of the period 	Reading from course reader Web research and questions
Wed. 22. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life in East Germany, the Stasi, literary and artistic expression Building and Fall of the Berlin Wall 	Reading from course reader
Thurs. 23. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential learning module with reflection 	Field trip to Berlin
Fri. 24. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential learning module with reflection 	Field trip to Berlin
Sat. 25. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiential learning module 	Field trip to Berlin
Week 3		
Mon. 27. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film representations of life in divided Germany: The Lives of Others (eastern perspectives) Discussion with eyewitnesses of German history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course reading;
Tues. 28. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Film representations of life in divided Germany: Goodbye Lenin (eastern perspectives) Questions and discussion 	Exam review

Wed. 29. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film representations of life in divided Germany: The Promise (eastern and western perspectives) • Questions and discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam review
Thurs. 30. Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam (completed online using course Moodle) 	
Fri. 31 Jan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing ceremony 	
Sat. 1. Feb.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departure day 	

Class Participation Rubric

	90-100	80-90	70-80	60-70
Frequency of participation in class	Student contributes regularly and is extremely engaged in discussion. Student attends all excursions and other arranged activities.	Student initiates a contribution at least once in each recitation and shows intellectual engagement. Student attends most excursions and other arranged activities.	Student initiates a contribution in half of the recitations and makes attempts at intellectual engagement. Student misses some excursions and other arranged activities.	Student does not initiate contribution & needs instructor to solicit input. Comments are often unrelated to course content. Students frequently misses excursions and other arranged activities.
Quality of comments	Comments always insightful & constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions & specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.	Comments mostly insightful & constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.	Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.	Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on the expression of opinion without substantiation.
Listening Skills	Student listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks, i.e., student hears what others say & contributes to the dialogue.	Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as indicated by comments that reflect & build on others' remarks; occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from the instructor.	Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking; looks at cellphone.	Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, frequently looks at cell phone, etc.