Course Title
Comparative Modern Societies:
20th Century German History

Course Number
HIST UA91330001, POL UA91330001, SOC UA91330001

SAMPLE SYLLABUS - ACTUAL SYLLABUS MAY VARY

Instructor Contact Information
Dr. Björn Hofmeister
bh89@nyu.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-3pm

Course Details
Fall 2013
Class meeting: Tuesdays / 3:30pm -6:15pm
Location of class: NYUB, Room “Spandau”

Prerequisites
None

Units earned
4

Course Description
This course is designed to introduce undergraduate students to the major events and principal problems in German history in the twentieth century. Through lectures, readings, and discussions the weekly classes will familiarize students with the conceptual narratives and methodological interpretations of twentieth century German history. Germany’s path to nation-building in 1871, the challenges of modernization in Imperial Germany, Weimar’s struggle between liberal-democratic and conservative-authoritarian forces, Germany’s politics in the two world wars in 1914/18 and 1939/45, and the construction of two Germanys after 1945 will be contextualized within broader frameworks of European development. Political, social, and cultural turning points will be discussed alongside key events in European history, such as diplomatic conflict prior to 1914, the crisis of democracy in Interwar-Europe, the rise of Fascism, the Second World War, the Cold War, the protest movements of 1968, Eastern European Dissident Movements and the final collapse of communism in 1989, as well as the current challenges in European politics.

Course Requirements
Students enrolled in this class should 1) attend all class meetings; 2) participate actively in the class discussions; 3) submit a short response paper (see class 4); 4) submit a short essay analyzing one of three reading options offered (see class 7); 5) submit a short response paper that analyzes one of three reading options (see class 8); 6) submit a short book review (see class 10); 7) submit a research paper on a topic of the student’s choice and present the paper’s main outline and thesis in class (class 15).
Assessment Components

Class Participation: counting 20% of total grade

One Response Paper: 2 pages (see session 4) counting 10% of total grade

One Short Essay: 5 pages (see session 7) counting 15% of total grade

One Response Paper: 2 pages (see session 8) counting 10% of total grade

One Short Book Review: 4 pages (see session 10) counting 15% of total grade

One Final Research Paper: 11-13 pages (due in session 15) counting 30% of total grade

Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / exam questions and his/her work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

Grade B: The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

Grade C: The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

Grade D: The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

Grade F: The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible

Grade Conversion

NYU Berlin uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:
A = 94-100
A-= 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B  = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C  =74-76
C- = 70-73
D+ = 67-69
D  = 65- 66
F = below 65

Attendance Policy
Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in NYU Berlin’s content courses that, unlike most courses at NYU NY, meet only once a week for three hours. Your attendance in both content and language courses is required and will be checked at each class meeting. As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor by e-mail. Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially and not shared with your professor, please approach the Director, Dr. Gabriella Etmektsgou (ge377@nyu.edu), or the Wellness Counselor, Dr. Janice Abarbanel (janice.abarbanel@nyu.edu). Your professor may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from Gabriella or Janice.

Unexcused absences affect students' grades: for content courses an unexcused absence leads to a deduction of 3% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade; in German language classes this leads to a deduction of 10 points from the attendance grade. Faculty is also entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival to class or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late for class counts as an unexcused absence. Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Exams, tests, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class. Three unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent because of any religious observance should notify the Director or Academic Coordinator in advance of the anticipated absence. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Director or Academic Coordinator will re-schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments.
Late Submission of Work

(1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

(2) Late work should be submitted in person to the instructor or to the Academic Coordinator, who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff may also personally accept the work, and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

(3) Unless an extension has been approved, work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late.

(4) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 weekdays following the session date fails and is given a zero.

(5) Please note: end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

(6) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

Plagiarism Policy

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. Proper referencing of your sources avoids plagiarism (see as one possible help the NYU library guide to referencing: http://nyu.libguides.com/content.php?pid=27555&sid=200118).

NYUB takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the instructor. Your instructor may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form. All assignments in this course will be checked for plagiarism using TurnItIn.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

Required Texts for Purchase


Edith Sheffer, *Burned Bridge: How East and West Germans Made the Iron Curtain*
Books can be bought at Saint Georges in Wörther Straße 27 near NYUB; readers can be bought at Sprintout behind Humboldt University (Georgenstraße/Universitätsstraße – S-Bahn-Bogen 190 please allow five hours between booking and collecting readers).

Supplemental Texts (in library stock - not required to purchase)


Mary Fulbrook, *History of Germany 1918-2008: The Divided Nation* (Chichester, 2009)


Internet Research Resources

As an internet gateway to important documents, maps, and pictures of German History from 1500 to 2000 please consult:

GERMAN HISTORY IN DOCUMENTS AND IMAGES

“German History in Documents and Images (GHDI) is a comprehensive collection of primary source materials documenting Germany's political, social, and cultural history from 1500 to the present. It comprises original German texts, all of which are accompanied by new English translations, and a wide range of visual imagery. The materials are presented in ten sections, which have been compiled by leading
scholars. All of the materials can be used free of charge for teaching, research, and related purposes; the site is strictly intended for individual, non-commercial use.

German History in Documents and Images (GHDI) comprises ten sections, each of which addresses a discrete period in Germany’s history. Each section has been compiled by one or two leading scholars and includes:

- an introduction to key developments in Germany’s social, political, and cultural history during the period;
- a selection of primary source documents (in German and English) originating from the period;
- a selection of images originating from or relating to the period;
- a selection of relevant maps.

Each section addresses the following subjects: Government and Administration; Parties and Organizations; Military and War; Economy and Labor; Nature and Environment; Gender, Family, and Generations; Region, City, and Countryside; Religion; Literature, Art, and Music; Elite and Popular Cultures; and Science and Education.

All of the materials can be accessed through keyword and author searches. Advanced options also allow searches to be limited and refined.

Many of the documents included in this project are difficult to locate in print publications, especially outside of Germany. All of the German-language documents included in GHDI are accompanied by contemporary English translations, almost all of which were commissioned for the project. GHDI also offers new access to a range of historically significant visual images, many of which will be unfamiliar to viewers.

http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/

Class 1 – [3 September 2013]

Introduction: Before the Nation State: Antagonism, Wars, and Revolutions in German Central Europe 1700-1871

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Class 2 [10 September 2013]
Nation-Building, Empire, and Conflict: Imperial Germany, 1871-1914


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Class 3 [17 September 2013]

The End of the 19th Century: The First World War, 1914-1918


* Wolfgang U. Eckart, “‘The Most Extensive Experiment that the Imagination Can Conceive”: War, Emotional Stress, and German Medicine, 1914-1918’, in Roger Chickering/Stig Förster (Eds), *Great War, Total War: Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 133-149


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


**Class 4 [24 September 2013]**

**Post-War I: Weimar Democracy and Its Challenges**


**Supplemental texts (not required readings):**


**TEXT FOR THE FIRST SHORT RESPONSE PAPER (due at the beginning of class 5):**

The response paper is designed to make the students engage in a critical assessment of the normative concepts of democracy and civil society in the historical context of Weimar politics as a specific case study.

*Sheri Berman, ‘Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic’, in *World Politics* 49 (1997), 401-429

**Class 5 [8 October 2013]**

**Post-War I: Weimar Culture and Its Challenges**


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Class 6 [15 October 2013]

National Socialism and the Propaganda of ‘Volksgemeinschaft’


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Class 7 [22 October 2013]

National Socialism, Racism, and Opposition


EXCERPT TEXTS FOR THE FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNMENT (due at the beginning of class 8):

The first essay assignment is designed to engage the students in a critical assessment of early historiographical and sociological approaches for the analysis of the “Third Reich that had decisively shaped nascent interpretations of the roots of Nazism and its social impact as well as its legal representation. The structure of the essay will be discussed beforehand in class.

Option 1: *National Socialism and Ideology (Anti-Semitism and Imperialism)*

*Supplemental texts:*


**Option 2: National Socialism and “Modernity”**


*Supplemental text:*


**Option 3: National Socialism and its Dual Legal Representation**


*Supplemental texts:*


**Class 8 [29 October 2013]**

**The Second World War, the Holocaust, and 1945**


*Supplemental texts (not required readings):*

Ulrich Herbert, ‘Policy of Extermination’, in Ulrich Herbert (Ed.), *National Socialist Extermination Policies: Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*

Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic Books, NY, 2010), 1-20

**EXEMPLARY TEXTS FOR THE SHORT RESPONSE PAPER (due at the beginning of class 9):**

The response paper is designed to make the students engage in a critical assessment of current historiographical and sociological approaches for the research of National Socialism as a social movement and for the comparative analysis of 20th century ethnic cleansing.

**Option 1: Characteristics of Fascism as a Social Movement**


**Option 2: Comparing the Rise of Fascism in Interwar Europe**

Michael Mann, *Fascists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 31-91

**Option 3: Comparing 20th Century Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide**


**Class 9 [5 November 2013]**

**Post-War II: Defeat, Occupation, and Division**

*Mary Fulbrook, *History of Germany 1918-2008: The Divided Nation* (Chichester, 2009), 113-142


**Supplemental texts (not required readings):**


Class 10 [12 November 2013]

(Re-)Constructing Two Germanies


TEXT FOR THE SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT/Book Review (due at the beginning of class 10):


Class 11 [19 November 2013]

Memory, Cultural Change, and the Power of Generations: 1968 in West and East Germany

*Norbert Frei, Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York, 2002), 67-91


*Martin Klimke, The Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2010), 40-74


Supplemental texts (not required readings):

**Class 12 [26 November 2013]**

"Americanization", “Sovietization”, and the Spectre of Individuality


*Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley: UCP, 2000), 31-70


**Class 13 [3 December 2013]**

1989 in German and European History


**Supplemental texts (not required readings):**


**Class 14 [10 December 2013]**

Post-Cold-War: German Identities, Politics of the Past, Germany and Europe


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Assignment: Students present their research topics in a short 5-8 minute presentation (research papers are due at the beginning of class 15)

Class 15 [17 December 2013]

Final class
Research papers are due in class

Classroom Etiquette
No food while class is in session.

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

We will try to organize field trips/guided tours to the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Topography of Terror Exhibition, and Stasi-Archiv Exhibition Normannenstrasse. Dates will be announced in class.

Your Instructor

Dr. Björn Hofmeister studied History, Political Science, and Sociology at Humboldt University Berlin, the University of Sussex, and Duke University. He defended his dissertation “Between Monarchy and Dictatorship. Radical Nationalism and Social Mobilization of the Pan-German League, 1914-1939” at Georgetown University in early 2012 and is currently revising the manuscript for publication. He is a postdoctoral fellow at Free University Berlin and has co-edited the volumes Deutsche Geschichte in Quellen und Darstellung. Kaiserreich und Erster Weltkrieg, 1871-1918, 5th edn (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2010) and Gelehrtenpolitik, Sozialwissenschaften und akademische Diskurse in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2006).