Course Title
Comparative Modern Societies: Politics and Society in 20th Century German History

Course Number
HIST-UA.9133001, POL-UA.9133001, SOC-UA.9133001

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Lecturer Contact Information
Dr. Björn Hofmeister
bh89@nyu.edu

Course Details
Class meeting: Wednesdays, 5:00pm - 7:45pm
Location of class: NYUB, Room “Spandau” (tbc)

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 the 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 Objective
The course will present an introduction to political, social, and cultural developments in 20th Century German history and use the study of German history to develop skills in the discipline of historical analysis.
Assessment Components
Students enrolled in this class should 1) attend all class meetings; 2) participate actively in the class discussions; 3) submit a short response paper (due in session 5); 4) take a mid-term exam (due in session 7); 5) submit a short book review (due in session 12); 6) submit a research paper on a topic of the student’s choice and present the paper’s main outline and thesis in class (due in session 15).

Class Participation: counting 20% of total grade

One Response Paper: 4-5 pages (due in session 5) counting 15% of total grade

Mid-Term Exam: (session 6) counting 20% of total grade

One Essay Book Review: 4-5 pages (due in session 12) counting 15% of total grade

Final Exam: (session 15) counting 30% of total grade

Note: In total, you should have no more than 10 pages of writing for all written assignments combined.

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 / answers to 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
Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Equivalent</th>
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<tr>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>65-66</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
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Alternatively:

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**Attendance Policy**

Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in courses that meet only once per week. 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 immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or NYU Berlin's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances must be presented to the Director. Doctor's notes need to be submitted to the Academics Office, who will inform your professors. Doctor's notes need to be from a local doctor and carry a signature and a stamp. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially, please approach NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor.

Unexcused absences affect students' grades: In content courses each unexcused absence (equaling one week's worth of classes) leads to a deduction of 2% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade. In German Language classes two or three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equaling one week's worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Three unexcused absences in one content course and five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Please note that for classes involving a field trip, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive in time at the announced meeting point.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to the Academics Office; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

**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 due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU Berlin's Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html](http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html)
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 lecturer or to the Academics Office, 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) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU Berlin's administration), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

(4) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays) following the submission date receives an F.

(5) 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.

(7) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

Provisions for Students with Disabilities
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/students-with-disabilities.html) for further information.

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 styles: http://nyu.libguides.com/citations).

NYU Berlin takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

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.

For a summary of NYU Global's academic policies please see: www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies
Required Text(s)
Electronic Resources (via NYU Classes / NYU Library):

Mary Fulbrook, *History of Germany 1918-2014: The Divided Nation* (Chichester, 2015)


The course reader will be made available through NYU classes.

The following titles are not available electronically and must be purchased:


Books can be bought at Dussmann in Friedrichstraße 90, where the books are pre-ordered for students. Additionally, one copy of each book is kept in the Reading Room of NYU Berlin's Academic Center, for you to read in the center but not to take out.

NYU Berlin Library Catalogue: [http://guides.nyu.edu/global/berlin](http://guides.nyu.edu/global/berlin) or follow the link on NYU Berlin's website (Academics/Facilities & Services).

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)


Corey Ross, The East German Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives in the Interpretation of the GDR (London: Arnold, 2002)

Internet Research Guidelines
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.”

German Historical Institute, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/
Additional Required Equipment

None

Session 1 – 1 Feb 2017

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

Supplemental texts:


Session 2 – 8 Feb 2017

Nation-Building, Empire, and Conflict: Imperial Germany, 1871-1914

Volker Berghahn, Imperial Germany, 1871-1914: Economy, Society, Culture, Politics (New York/Oxford 2005), 10-19, 38-44, 70-87, 189-209, and 244-273

DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):

- Bernhard von Bülow: “Place in the Sun” (1897)
- Friedrich Fabri: “Does Germany Need Colonies?” (1879)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Session 3 – 15 Feb 2017

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

Roger Chickering, Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), 95-131, 151-191

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

DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):
- Soldiers Describe Combat III: Hans Stegemann (1914)
- Additional Maps

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Session 4 – 22 Feb 2017
Post-War I: Weimar Democracy and Its Challenges


DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):
- Program of the German Workers’ Party (1920)
- Adolf Hitler on the November Revolution (1925)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


TEXT FOR THE SHORT RESPONSE PAPER (due at the beginning of session 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.


Session 5 – 1 Mar 2017
Post-War I: Weimar Culture and Its Challenges

Response paper is due at the beginning of class.


DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):

- Hannes Meyer: “The New World” (1926)
- Fritz Lang: “The Future of the Feature Film in Germany” (1926)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Session 6 – 8 Mar 2017

Mid-Term Exam

15 Mar 2017 – SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS!

Session 7 – 22 Mar 2017

National Socialism and the Propaganda of ‘Volksgemeinschaft’


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Session 8 – 29 Mar 2017

National Socialism, Racism, and Opposition

(Field Trip to the ‘Topography of Terror’ Exhibition)


Supplemental texts (not required readings):


DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):
- Heinrich Himmler’s Secret Directive to SS Members (1939)
- SD-Report on the Attitude of Young People towards the NSDAP (1943)

Session 9 – 5 Apr 2017
The Second World War, the Holocaust, and 1945
(Field Trip to the German-Russian Museum Karlshorst)

Wolfgang Benz, A Concise History of the Third Reich (Berkeley/Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, 2006), 190-281

DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):
- Joseph Goebbels’ Speech: “Total War” (1943)
- Additional Maps from Richard J. Evans, The Third Reich at War (London: Penguin, 2009)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Omer Bartov, The Eastern Front, 1941-1945, German Troops, and the Barbarisation of Warfare, 2nd ed. (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001), 68-141

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

Session 10 – 12 Apr 2017
Post-War: Defeat, Occupation, and Division

Mary Fulbrook, History of Germany 1918-2014: The Divided Nation (Chichester, 2015),113-162


DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):
- OMGUS Survey: National Socialism (1945-1947)
- OMGUS Survey: Choice between National Socialism and Communism (1946-1949)
Conditions of Returning POWs (undated)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


**Session 11 – 19 Apr 2017**

**Constructing East Germany. Politics, Society, and Culture in the GDR, 1945/49-1980s**


DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):

- Proclamation Central Committee of the German Communist Party (1945)
- Recommendation for Promoting Women’s Work in East German Enterprises (1949)
- Statistical Report on Development of the Standard of Living in the GDR and the FDR (1956)
- GDR Council of Ministers’ Decision to Seal the Border (12 August 1961)
- Agreement between the GDR and Vietnam Contract Labor (1980)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


**TEXT FOR THE ESSAY ASSIGNMENT/Book Review (due at the beginning of class 12):**


**Session 12 – 26 Apr 2017**

*(Planned Field Trip to the Stasi-Archive or the Stasi-Museum - tbc)*

“Ostpolitik” and the Fall of the Wall in 1989 in German and European History


Mary Fulbrook, *History of Germany 1918-2014: The Divided Nation* (Chichester, 2015), 259-279

DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):
Policy Statement by Willy Brandt (1969)
- The Basic Treaty (1972)
- Founding Appeal of the NEW FORUM (9 September 1989)
- The Fall of the Wall – Tageszeitung (9 November 1989)

Session 13 – 3 May 2017
(Re-)Constructing West Germany. Politics, Society, and Culture in the FDR, 1945/49-1980s

Book review is due at the beginning of class.

Mary Fulbrook, *History of Germany 1918-2014: The Divided Nation* (Chichester, 2015), 164-236

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

DOCUMENTS (http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/):

- Decline in Religious Observance (1960-1989)
- The Labor Minster Welcomes the Millionth Guest Worker (1964)
- “The Foreign Workers and US”, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (3 June 1961)
- Election Results to the Bundestag (1949-2009)

Supplemental texts (not required readings):


Session 14 – 10 May 2017
Post-Cold-War: German Identities, Politics of the Past, Germany and Europe

Mary Fulbrook, *History of Germany 1918-2014: The Divided Nation* (Chichester, 2015), 281-318


DOCUMENTS:


Supplemental texts (not required readings):
Session 15 – 17 May 2017

Final Exam

Classroom Etiquette
No food, no cell phones, and no online social media while class is in session.

Required Co-Curricular Activities
There will be field trips/guided tours to the Topography of Terror Exhibition Berlin-Kreuzberg (Niederkircherstrasse 8, 10963 Berlin), the German-Russian Museum Berlin-Karlshorst (Zwieseler Strasse 4, 10318 Berlin), and Stasi-Archiv Exhibition or Stasi-Museum Berlin-Lichtenberg (Ruschestrasse, 10365 Berlin - tbc). Dates will be announced in class.

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities
None

Your Lecturer
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 teaching at the history department at Free University Berlin. He has co-edited the volumes Deutsche Geschichte in Quellen und Darstellung. Kaiserreich und Erster Weltkrieg, 1871-1918, 6th ed. (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2013), Gelehrtenpolitik, Sozialwissenschaften und akademische Diskurse in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2006), and Heinrich Claß. Politische Erinnerungen des Vorsitzenden des Alldeutschen Verbandes 1915-1933/36 (ed. by the Historische Kommission München/Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, forthcoming).