Course Title

Comparative Modern Societies

Politics and Society in 20th Century Germany

Course Number
HIST-UA.9133D01; POL-UA.9133D01; SOC-UA.9133D01

Instruction Mode: In-Person

Fall 2022

Lecturer Contact Information
Dr. Carolyn Taratko (she/her)

Your instructor will inform you about the learner hours (one-on-one meetings).

Prerequisites
n/a

Units earned
4

Course Details
Wednesday, 10:00am to 12:45 pm

Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.

In the interest of protecting the NYU Berlin community, we are closely following guidance around COVID-19 from the Robert Koch Institute (Germany's institute for disease control and prevention), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization, and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority. You are required to adhere to the most recent policies. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person; however, this may change at any point during the semester if local COVID-19 regulations so require. You will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol.
Course Description
This class offers a survey of the history of Germany’s twentieth century. From its unification as a nation state in 1871 until today, Germany has experienced five regimes and two world wars. Its territorial extent has changed drastically and it has included and excluded various ethnic groups and nationalities over time, incorporating them with varying degrees of success. We will examine the rise of the German nation state, with particular attention to the two world wars and the trajectories of fascism and communism during the twentieth century. In the latter part of this course, we will trace the divergent but related histories of East and West Germany. This course aims to place Germany in a transnational context, asking how imperial ambitions and global exchange shaped German history. Several themes are highlighted: social conflict and regulation, perceptions of race, class, and gender, and political battles that contributed to polarization and stalemate.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)
Students will learn about major events, debates, and controversies in German history that tie it to larger transnational/international debates. They will be able to reflect on how the process of coming to terms with the past shapes German society today, as well as to reflect on the comparative and often-interrelated histories of Germany and their respective home countries. Students will also be equipped to analyze and interpret primary sources, whether documents, images, or film. Furthermore, they will acquire skills in developing and communicating ideas through practice in discussion and in writing.

Course Approach to Teaching & Learning (CATL)
This course approaches the political, social, and cultural history of twentieth-century Germany with special attention to its global and transnational dimensions. While most of the readings focus on Germany, through lecture and discussion the instructor seeks to draw out comparative elements and emphasize interconnection across borders. Students will learn by engaging firsthand with primary sources in a variety of forms (texts, images, film). These exercises help them to see the interpretive work of academic historians and analyze arguments.

Assessment Components

1. Class Participation (20% of total grade)

Students are expected to come prepared to every course meeting and productively contribute to class discussion. The participation component includes one mandatory meeting in office hours, to be scheduled in advance.

2. 4 x 2 Discussion Questions (15% of total grade)

Four times over the course of the semester, you will need to send me a set of at least two discussion questions. These questions must be posted to that week’s Brightspace Discussion Forum by 11:45 pm before the day of class (Tuesday night). I can then incorporate your questions and responses into our discussions. To receive full credit, you must submit at least 8 questions over the course of the semester. These should not be
“yes/no” questions, but instead they should bring your classmates into exchange about a major interpretive issue or question arising from a source/sources.

3. Two short response papers, 1250–1500 words (combined 30% of the total grade)

These papers will be submitted at two points in the semester: on October 5 and November 30. I will provide prompts to help get you thinking about the texts via our course Brightspace page well in advance of the deadline. These responses should not be a summary of the readings. Please upload your paper to Brightspace as a Word document by 6:00 PM CET on the respective days.

4. Take-Home Midterm (20%)

The midterm will focus on the readings and the content of our discussions. Part One: You will have the opportunity to choose 3/5 short-answer identifications, which will consist of a term, event or person. Part Two: Two short (750-1000 word) essays. The midterm is due by 6:00 PM CET on Wednesday, October 19 as a Word document on Brightspace.

5. Final take-home exam (15%)

The final will be similar in structure to the midterm, however the identification in Part One will be taken from the second half of the course. The final should also be uploaded as a Word Doc to Brightspace by 6:00 PM CET on Wednesday, December 14.

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

Required Text(s)
Electronic Resources (via Brightspace / NYU Library Course Reserves)

All texts will be made available via Brightspace or are accessible as electronic books via the NYU Library Catalogue.

Please follow this link for the NYU Berlin Library Catalogue or the link on NYU Berlin’s website (Academics/Facilities & Services).

Additional Required Equipment
None
Schedule of Meetings

Session 1 – 7 Sept 2022 | What/Where/When was Germany’s Twentieth Century? Insiders & Outsiders in Imperial Germany
This session introduces students to the content of the course and to the instructor. Students will reflect on key questions related to understanding Germany’s twentieth century.

Session Learning Outcomes (SLOs): Students will encounter a number of different source materials (primary vs. secondary sources; also visual sources and film) in a “Primary Source Workshop,” to be completed in small groups and discussed as a class, so that they are able to work with primary source material in the coming weeks and distinguish between primary and secondary sources.

Session 2 – 14 Sept 2022 | Germany at a Crossroads: Understanding Rapid Social Change at the Turn of the Century
This week introduces students to the fast-paced changes and social dislocation that took place in the first decades after unification in 1871.

Readings:
- Peter Fritzsche, Reading Berlin 1900, 1-11; 87-126.
- Simmel, The Metropolis and Mental Life (1903) GHDI
- Images: August Sander, Heinrich Zille

SLOs: Outline how urbanization, industrialization and globalization affected the lives of average Germans. Trace forms of criticism and discontent with new social forms and arrangements in the modern metropolis.

Session 3 – 21 Sept 2022 | The German Empire: Administering Colonies and Waging Colonial War
This session explores the expansion of the German Empire overseas. In it, students will discuss how these experiences with formal and informal colonialism contributed to ideas about German nationhood.

Readings:
- Bernhard von Bülow’s speech, “Germany’s Place in the Sun (1897)” GHDI
- Rosa Luxembourg, “Another View of Things (1913)” GHDI

Recommended:
- David Ciarlo, Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany, 25-64. (Ebook Central)
SLOs: Students will be able to answer questions such as: How was the German Empire imagined and created in relation to other European colonial powers? What did Germany hope to gain from expansion and how did they view the indigenous people they encountered there?

Session 4 – 28 Sept 2022 | Germany and the Great War: Life on the Homefront
This session explores World War I as the first modern war with a particular focus on the homefront, gender and work during wartime.

Reading:
- “To the Civilized World: Manifesto of the 93" (1914)
- Werner Sombart, Merchants and Heroes (1915) GHDI
- Images: Käthe Kollwitz, The Parents; Otto Dix, Flanders

SLOs: Outline how the conflict transformed life for civilians at home, as society was mobilized to support and finance the burden of war. Explore women’s wartime experiences through a variety of primary sources and be able to reflect on how war sharpens social divides.

Session 5 – 5 Oct 2022 | New Beginnings? Weimar as a Laboratory of Modernity
The end of the war brought an end to the German Empire. In this session, students examine the messy and often violent transition to the Weimar Republic, which represented Germany’s first real experience with democracy.

Reading:
- Catherine Epstein, The Last Revolutionaries: German Communists and their Century, ch. 1.
- Gabriele Tergit, “Paragraph 218: A Modern Gretchen Tragedy” (1926) from GHDI
- Thomas Wehrling “Berlin is Becoming a Whore” WS (Weimar Sourcebook)
- Bruno Taut "The New Dwelling: The Woman as Creator" WS
- Grete Lihotzky, "Rationalization in the Household" WS
- Fritz Wildung, “Sport is the Will to Culture” (1926) WS
- Ernst Priess, “Physical Fitness – A National Necessity” (1926) WS

SLOs: Identify key features of the Weimar era and tensions in a nascent democratic society. Explore how shifting gender norms related to the concepts of the “New Man” and “New Woman” emerged.

FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE BY 6:00 PM CET on Oct. 5 – UPLOAD TO BRIGHTSPACE
Session 6 – 12 Oct 2022 | The Third Reich at War and the “Final Solution”
Visit to Topography of Terror – Meet at Niederkirchnerstraße 8, 10963 Berlin (near student residence) at 9:50. Tour starts promptly at 10!

Reading:
● Omer Bartov, ‘Savage War: German Warfare and Moral Choices in World War II’ in Germany's War, 3-32.

SLOs: A visit to this documentation center at the former site of the Gestapo, SS and Reich Security Main Office will help students learn about the SS and the police during the Third Reich. A guided tour enables them to understand the environment of fear, surveillance, and coercion, but also the voluntariness, that characterized life under the regime.

Session 7 – 19 Oct 2022 | The Rise of National Socialism

In this session we will take a step back and attempt to understand the appeal of National Socialism to millions of Germans.

Reading:
● Peter Fritzsche, Hitler’s First Hundred Days: When Germans Embraced the Third Reich, chapters: “Crisis if You Please,” “Mystery Tour,” “Your Jewish Grandmother” [online at NYU library]
● In-class: Selections from Victor Klemperer, Language of the Third Reich

SLOs: Grapple with the appeal that National Socialism as an ideology held for millions of Germans and account for the party’s electoral successes through concerted party-political organizational tactics.

MIDTERM DUE BY 6:00 PM CET on Oct. 19

Session 8 – 26 Oct 2022 | Postwar: Occupation and Attempts at Denazification

After the war, Germany was occupied by the four Allied Powers. But the end of the Third Reich did not result in a “zero hour,” or a clean break with the past. In this session, students will weigh the successes and failures of the process of denazification in both West Germany and East Germany. A closer look at how the category of race operated in postwar West Germany will enhance their understanding of how notions of race transformed after the end of the Nazi racial state in 1945.

Reading:
Session 9 – 2 Nov 2022 | Race and Migration in the Two Germanies
This week will further explore race and racism in both postwar East and West German societies. We will discuss the status of the so-called “guest workers” in West Germany, who were recruited from Turkey and Italy to help reconstruct the postwar economy, as well as contract workers from socialist countries, such as Vietnam and Mozambique, who arrived in the East.

Reading:

Recommended:
- Rita Chin, “Guest Worker Migration and the Unexpected Return of Race,” in Rita Chin et. al. (eds.), After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe, 80-101.

SLOS: Students will be able to recognize how citizens of both countries coped with differences and to analyze the discourse of race that developed out of these encounters and histories.

A visit to Sachsenhausen concentration camp is tentatively planned for November 4

*** Session 10 – 9 Nov 2022 | Exploring Local Memory Culture on Germany's “Day of Fate” ***
Students will undertake an independent group excursion to understand Germany's unique memory culture on the occasion of its “Day of Fate,” when the anniversaries of several
important events in German history collide. They will gain a better understanding of local memory culture and politics, to be discussed next week. **Exact location TBD.**

**Session 11 – 16 Nov 2022 | The Global 60s**
This week explores the student revolts and protest culture of the 1960s and early 70s. The readings focus on the events surrounding 1968 in Germany and its connections to movements across Europe and the globe.

**Reading:**

**Recommended:**

**SLOs:** Evaluate the impact of grassroots movements and organization on the development of protest cultures; trace transnational connections between social protest movements; understand escalating tensions between youth and traditional authorities.

**Session 12 – 23 Nov 2022 | Surveillance and Everyday Life in East Germany**
Meet regularly (in-class) for 80 minutes and then walk over to “Everyday in the GDR” Exhibition in the Kulturbräuerel together.

This session introduces students to everyday life in East Germany. In the first part of class, students will come to terms with how the Ministry for State Intelligence (Stasi) gained a hold on East German society by using a vast network of informal informants against citizens.

**Reading:**
- Fulbrook, *A Concise History*, 235-243
- “A Communist Idealist Criticized the ‘Real Existing Socialism’ of the GDR (1977)” GHDI
- “East German on Human Rights as Based on Social Equality (1976)” GHDI
- *The Lives of Others* [film]

**SLOs:** Question how experiences of East Germans raised some difficulties in coming to terms with the past as a result of the dissolution of the GDR; place “Ostalgie,” or nostalgia for the East, in the Federal Republic today in context in light of the massive shock and changes to the social system following a visit to the “Everyday Life in the GDR” exhibition.
Session 13 – 30 Nov 2022 | The Road to German Reunification
This session will explore the events leading up to the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification in 1989. It focuses on mounting dissatisfaction in the East, as well as the larger social and economic challenges faced by countries in the Eastern Bloc.

Reading:
- Mary Fulbrook, A Concise History of Germany, 243-257
- Storming the Stasi Headquarters (September 1989) GHDI
- The Fall of the Wall, Tageszeitung (1989) GHDI
- The Motives of Ethnic German Remigrants (Spätaussiedler) GHDI
- Image: The Last Monday Demonstration (1990)

Recommended:
- A Perfect Crime (Rohwedder Documentary) Netflix

SLOs: Reconstruct how the two halves of the city became rejoined after November 1989; reflect on some of the longer-term problems resulting from reunification, including poverty, resentment, and disillusionment.

SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE BY 6:00 PM CET on Nov. 30 – UPLOAD TO BRIGHTSPACE

Session 14 – 7 Dec 2022 | German Memory Culture Today
In this session, we will dive into very current debates in German memory culture, which is so prominent in the city. In one recent iteration of the debate, sparked by a polemic in an online magazine by historian Dirk Moses, the issue of the relative importance of the Holocaust versus Germany’s history of colonial violence was broached.

Walking Tour Berlin Postcolonial

Reading:
- Dirk Moses, “The German Catechism”
- Tiffany Florvil, “Queer Memory and Black Germans”
- Robert G. Moeller, “Germans as Victims?: Thoughts on a Post-Cold War History of World War IIs Legacies,” in History & Memory 17.1 (2005), 147-194

Recommended:

SLOs: Debate how these two frames of reference are represented in both academic debate and popular memory culture; Evaluate the merits of both frames of reference and gain an understanding of current debates about how history writing and representation in Germany frame its present.
Finals Week – 14 Dec 2022
TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM DUE BY 6:00 PM CET on December 14

Recommendations for a Positive Teaching and Learning Environment
This class has an important discussion component. In order to foster a positive learning environment, no laptops are permitted in class. Exceptions will be made for students with academic accommodations from the Moses Center. Mobile phones need to be switched off during class.

Suggested Learning Opportunities that Relate to our Course
There are many activities and events that deal with different aspects of German history over the course of the semester. Students are encouraged to participate in NYU excursions, which will be advertised in the “Berliner Brief.” They can receive up to 2 extra credit points on the final for participating in an excursion and submitting a short (1 page) reflection piece on the activity. This includes the planned visit to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp on Nov 4. Other activities will be advertised on the course Brightspace as dates become available.

Your Lecturer:
Dr. Carolyn Taratko studied History in Connecticut, Paris and Berlin. In 2019 she completed her PhD in History at Vanderbilt University. She is currently a research associate and lecturer at the University of Erfurt and works as the Managing Editor of NTM–Journal of History of Science, Technology and Medicine. She is currently working on her book manuscript, which deals with how Germans approached the question of the food supply as both a tool and an object of governance in the increasingly globalized world. This project took her to archives across Germany, the US and Namibia. She is particularly interested in exploring the legacy of German colonialism with students.

Academic Policies

Grade Conversion
Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

A = 94-100 or 4.0
A- = 90-93 or 3.7
B+ = 87-89 or 3.3
B = 84-86 or 3.0
B- = 80-83 or 2.7
C+ = 77-79 or 2.3
C = 74-76 or 2.0
C- = 70-73 or 1.7
D+ = 67-69 or 1.3
D = 65-66 or 1.0
F = below 65 or 0
Attendance Policy
Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to berlin.academics@nyu.edu to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team (berlin.academics@nyu.edu) by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to NYU Berlin’s director or Wellness Counselor. Doctor's notes must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academics team, who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

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 site staff; 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.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

Final exams
Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work
(1) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public 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.

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

(3) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director, Dr. Gabriella Etmektsoglou.

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

(5) 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.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](https://www.nyu.edu/globalacademics/integrity/index.html)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU 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, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

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. 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 guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](https://www.nyu.edu/globalacademics/integrity/index.html)

[NYU Library Guides](https://guides.nyu.edu)

**Inclusivity Policies and Priorities**
NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

**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 University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

**Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)**

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website.

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the Personalizing Zoom Display Names website.

**Moses Accommodations Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Berlin.

**Bias Response**

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University’s existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.
The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form (link)]
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- US Phone Number: +1 212-998-2277
- Local Number in Berlin: +49 (0) 30 2902 91277

Please consider the environment before printing this syllabus. If printing is necessary, please select only the essential page range.