Advanced German: Composition & Conversation
Contemporary German Cultures

Instructor Contact Information
Dr. Nikolai Preuschoff
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Course Details
Mondays and Thursdays 11am-12.15pm
NYU Berlin, room TBA

Prerequisites
Intermediate German 2 or Intensive Intermediate German.

Units earned
4

Course Description
This course aims to explore post-war history and culture in East and West Germany. Taking as a historical and geographical framework the emergence of the two German states and then the contemporary, reunified nation, students will encounter works of literature, film, photography, music, art, and architecture, each linked to a specific time and place. Classes are taught entirely in German and focus on the key aspects of language learning — speaking, reading, writing, and listening.

Course Objective
Conversation & Composition is designed for post-Intermediate students of German with a solid grasp of German grammar and vocabulary, who wish to extend their knowledge of the German language, history, and culture through reading, watching films, discussion, and writing. Conversation & Composition is a reading and writing intensive course. Emphasis is placed on refining written expression and developing the ability to express, discuss, and argue opinions.

Assessment Components
Preparedness and active class participation 20%
Group presentation/session leading 15%
Four take-home grammar quizzes 20%
Three compositions (1000 words each) 25%
Final paper (4 p., 1500 words) 20%
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 their work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and their 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:

- \[ B+ = 87-89 \]
- \[ C+ = 77-79 \]
- \[ D+ = 67-69 \]
- \[ F = \text{below 65} \]
- \[ A = 94-100 \]
- \[ B = 84-86 \]
- \[ C = 74-76 \]
- \[ D = 65-66 \]
- \[ A- = 90-93 \]
- \[ B- = 80-83 \]
- \[ C- = 70-73 \]

Alternatively:

- A= 4.0
- A- = 3.7
- B+ = 3.3
- B = 3.0
- B- = 2.7
- C+ = 2.3
- C = 2.0
- C- =1.7
- D+ = 1.3
- D = 1.0
- F = 0.0.

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 (equalling 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 (equalling 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 ([https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/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](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](http://www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies)

**Required Text(s)**


The book can be bought at Dussmann in Friedrichstraße 90, where the German-language 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.

**Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)**


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.
Films
- Wim Wenders: Der Himmel über Berlin (1987)
- Anna und Jörg Winger: Deutschland 83 (Episode 1, 2015)
- Yasemin Şamdereli: Almanya, Wilkommen in Deutschland (2011)

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

Additional helpful Ressources
- A good German–English online dictionary: www.pons.de. Alternatively: dict.leo.org or http://www.dict.cc (all provide pronunciation and the past tense forms of verbs)
- For flash cards you could use www.anki.com
- Two very good resources for German historical and cultural topics are Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (http://www.bpb.de) and Lebendiges Museum Online (https://www.dhm.de/lemo)

Additional Required Equipment
None

Semesterplan
—subject to change—

Session 1 on 28 Aug 2017
Einführung, Organisatorisches

Session 2 on 31 Aug 2017

Session 3 on 4 Sep
Nachkriegszeit, Wiederaufbau
**Session 4 on 7 Sep**
West-Deutschland, Zeit der "Wunder"
Wir Wunderkinder: "Lied vom Wirtschaftswunder":
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGBVB3KBPn8

Grammatik-Thema I

**Session 5 on 11 Sep**

Hand in: Grammatik-Quiz I

**Session 6 on 14 Sep**
Ost-Deutschland: 17. Juni, Flucht in den Westen: Abstimmung mit den Füßen; Bau der Mauer, Deutsche Teilung
https://youtu.be/uKytoxqLlaE

**Session 7 on 18 Sep, 9.30am-12:45pm**
Workshop Maxim Gorki-Theater

**Session 8 on 21 Sep**
Alltag in der DDR: Anpassung und Widerstand
Harald Hauswald, DDR Street Photography (Ostkreuz). Über seine Arbeiten:
Wolf Biermann: „Ermutigung“, Kölner Sporthalle 1976. Schauen Sie:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0e6q6tLRzGM

Hand in: Composition 1

**Theaterbesuch 23 Sep, 7pm**
http://www.gorki.de/de/the-situation

**Session 9 on 25 Sep**
* Field Trip Bernauer Straße: Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer *
Informationen: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYU_v0YhnlE und http://www.berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de/de/

**Session 10 on 28 Sep**
Grammatik-Thema II

Session 11 on 2 Oct
* Exkursion in Stiftung Haus der Geschichte, Ausstellung „Alltag in der DDR“
Mini-Präsentationen

Session 12 on 5 Oct
Von Ost nach West
Schauen Sie: Deutschland 83 (Episode 1) on DVD.
Lesen Sie über David Bowies Konzert vor dem Reichstag 1987: https://youtu.be/0C7F1nBt1q4
und: http://www.music tours-berlin.de/de/bowie-berlin-walk

Hand in: Grammatik-Quiz II

Session 13 on 9 Oct
Mauerfall und Wiedervereinigung

***Thursday, 12 Oct: No class (Gorki workshop on 18 Sep instead)***

Oct 14 – 22: * Fall break – no class *

Session 14 on 23 Oct
Die BRD in den 60er Jahren: 68er-Bewegung, Aufstand gegen die Elterngeneration, Deutscher Herbst

Hand in: Composition 2

Session 15 on 26 Oct
Neue Leipziger Schule
Vortrag und Gespräch: Tino Geiss
http://tinogeiss.de/?section=biography

Session 16 on 30 Oct
Nach der Wende: Unterschiede zwischen Ost und West, Probleme der Wiedervereinigung, Mauer in den Köpfen
Graphic novel: Gerhard Seyfried, Flucht aus Berlin (Berlin 1990)

Grammatik-Thema III

Session 17 on 1 Nov
Autoren nach der Wende: Erinnerung an DDR-Kindheit und Fernweh

Session 18 on 6 Nov 2017
Lesung und Gespräch mit Judith Schalansky

Session 19 on 9 Nov
„Papas Kino ist tot“. Das Oberhausener Manifest und der Neue deutsche Film
[http://www.kurzfilmtage.de/archiv/manifest/](http://www.kurzfilmtage.de/archiv/manifest/)
Schauen Sie: Wim Wenders, Der Himmel über Berlin (1987). Den Film finden Sie in der NYU Library: [https://getit.library.nyu.edu/go/9427948](https://getit.library.nyu.edu/go/9427948)

Hand in: Grammatik-Quiz III

Session 20 on 13 Nov
Berlin in den 90ern

Session 21 on Tuesday, 14 Nov, 7pm
Lesung mit Judith Hermann

***Thursday, 16 Nov: No class (Judith Hermann reading on 14 Nov instead)***

Session 22 on 20 Nov 2017
Migration in Ost- und Westdeutschland
Lesen Sie: "Migration in Ost- und Westdeutschland von 1955 bis 2004"
[http://www.bpb.de/themen/8Q83M7,0,0,Migration_in_Ost_und_Westdeutschland_von_1955_bis_2004.html](http://www.bpb.de/themen/8Q83M7,0,0,Migration_in_Ost_und_Westdeutschland_von_1955_bis_2004.html)

Grammatik-Thema IV

Hand in: Composition 3

Session 23 on 23 Nov
Migration und Gesellschaftskritik
Lesen Sie: "Günter Wallraff: 25 Jahre 'Ganz unten'"
http://www.dw.com/de/g%C3%B3nter-wallraff-25-jahre-ganz-unten/a-6138198-0

Session 24 on 27 Nov 2017
Zaimoglu: "Mein Deutschland", Die Zeit, 12.4. 2006

Session 25 on 30 Nov
Film: Almanya. Willkommen in Deutschland (2011), DVD.

Hand in: Grammatik-Quiz IV

Session 26 on 4 Dec 2017
Flüchtlingskrise
http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2016-03/fluechtlingskrise-deutschland-bilanz-fluechtlingspolitik-zaesur
Für eine Übersicht und weitere Artikel lesen Sie bitte auch die Themenseite der ZEIT, „Hoffnung Europa“: http://www.zeit.de/thema/fluechtlung

Session 27 on 6 Dec 2017
Final session, farewell

11 Dec – 14 Dec
Submission: Final paper (hardcopy)

Classroom Etiquette
Speak German. Please be punctual, please don’t eat in class, and please only use your smart phones if class-related and necessary.

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities
Please take advantage of the opportunity to participate in the Tutor-Program, the Tandem-Program and the German Language Trainings at NYU Berlin.

Your Instructor
Nikolai Preuschoff was born in Berlin and studied German Literature, Philosophy and Art History in Freiburg, Paris, Berlin, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. Between 2012 and 2016 he taught in Ireland, at the University College Cork. His PhD thesis is on W.G. Sebald and Walter Benjamin and was published in 2015 in Heidelberg.