Course Title
Topics in 20th-Century German Literature: Traditions of City Writing

Course Number
GERM-UA.9298001, SOC-UA.9435001

SAMPLE SYLLABUS – ACTUAL SYLLABUS MAY VARY

Instructor Contact Information
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Neuber
wn7@nyu.edu

Course Details
Mondays, 5:15pm – 8.00pm
Location of class: NYU Berlin, Academic Centre, Room: tbc

Prerequisites
None

Units earned
4

Course Description
Ranging from the 20th into the 21st century, this course addresses the sociology of the metropolis and especially representations of Berlin in literature and film, as well as some of the city’s significant architectural features. Accordingly, students will investigate different aspects of Berlin, ranging from its growth into a metropolis in the German Empire and its cultural richness in the Weimar Period to the devastation of the city during World War II; from the division in the post-war period, which also produced two separate literary systems, to polyphonic and transcultural texts written after reunification. The course will also focus on German-Turkish literature. In its theoretical approach, the course offers insights into new paradigms of cultural studies such as “spatial turn” or “urbanism”, and it seeks to enhance academic skills regarding the reflection on gender aspects. Another major aspect is the question of memory as represented in the city space.

Course Objective
This course aims to familiarise students with diverse forms of cultural representation such as literature and film as well as enhance their knowledge of Berlin’s cultural past and buoyant present. Furthermore, the course focuses on developing the students’ awareness of different writing/visual styles, which not only stand for specific genres or particular facets of literary/film history, but also mirror manifold individual perspectives on the metropolis.

Assessment Components
Class participation (including well-prepared reading; making excerpts and annotations to the
respective texts) counting 20% of total grade.
- For class participation see also classroom etiquette below.
Two short papers (1200-1500 words each) counting 30% of total grade (15% each).
One final research paper (3000-4000 words) counting 40% of total grade.
- NB: All papers are to be submitted as hard copies.
Class presentation (5 to 10 minutes) counting 10% of total grade.

Failure to submit or fulfil any required component will 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 organise 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 instructor may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

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

Alternatively:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
A &=& 4.0 & A- &=& 3.7 \\
B+ &=& 3.3 & B &=& 3.0 & B- &=& 2.7 \\
C+ &=& 2.3 & C &=& 2.0 & C- &=& 1.7 \\
D+ &=& 1.3 & D &=& 1.0 & F &=& 0.0. \\
\end{array}
\]

**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 per week in a double-session 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 immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). 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 NYUB’s Director or Wellness Counsellor. Your professor or NYUB’s administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from the Director or Wellness Counsellor. Doctor’s notes need to be submitted to the Assistant Director for Academics or the Arts Coordinator, who will inform your professors.

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. Three unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. In German Language classes three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equalling one week's worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Furthermore, 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 always 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.

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 their instructor AND NYUB’s Academic Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance before being absent for this purpose. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Director or Assistant Director will re-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.

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 Assistant Director for Academics, 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 (with a doctor's note or by approval of the Director or Assistant Director), 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) 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).

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.

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 Texts
- Thomas Brussig, Heroes Like Us [Helden wie wir, 1995], London: The Harvill Press 2000 (will be provided in class, not required to purchase).
- Irmard Keun, The Artificial Silk Girl [Das kunstseidene Mädchen, 1932], New York: Other Press 2011 (will be provided in class, not required to purchase).

All other texts will be provided on NYU Classes.

Books can be bought at Saint Georges bookshop in Wörther Straße 27 near NYUB, where the books are pre-ordered for students. Students can re-sell their used books at the end of the semester to Saint Georges (with the exception of German language books). Additionally, one copy of each book is kept in the Reading Room of NYUB's Academic Center, for you to read in the center but not to take out.

Supplemental Texts (not required to purchase)
- Further texts to be discussed in class

Internet Research Guidelines
To be discussed in class

Additional Required Equipment
None

Class Schedule

Session 1 – 1 Feb 2016
Introduction
Introduction to the course, discussion of the syllabus, getting to know each other, finding common interests.

Session 2 – 8 Feb 2016
Studies in the Sociology of the Metropolis
Read for class:
Georg Simmel: The Metropolis and Mental Life (1903) (see NYU Classes).
Harold M. Proshansky: The City and Self-Identity (see NYU Classes).
Session 3 – 15 Feb 2016  
Modern Writing Techniques I  
Read for class:  
Alfred Döblin: *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929), First Book, pp. 3-29 (see NYU Classes).  

Session 4 – 29 Feb 2016  
Modern Writing Techniques II  
Erich Kästner: Going to the Dogs (read all)

Session 5 – 7 March 2016  
Modern Writing Techniques III / Women Voices of the Weimar Republic  
Read for class:  

First short paper (500 - 800 words) due.

Session 6 – 14 March 2016  
*M* (dir.: Fritz Lang, 1931) – will be screened in class and discussed afterwards.

Session 7 – 21 March 2016  
Applied Sociology / The Flaneur – A Theoretical Approach to City Writing  
Read for class:  
Franz Hessel: *In Berlin* (read all)  
Walter Benjamin: *Berlin Childhood around 1900* (1932-34/38), 2006, pp. 37-57 (see NYU Classes).  

Office hour before and after class to discuss the short papers.
25 March – 3 April 2016 – Spring Break – No Class

Session 8 – 4 April 2016
Literature and Politics
Read for class:
Hans Fallada: *Alone in Berlin*, pp. 146-178, 387-418

Session 9 – 11 April 2016
Politics and the Urban Space – The Germania-Project
Field trip. Meeting point: North entrance of Hauptbahnhof (Central Station)
In preparation see https://deutschlandunddieostmark.wordpress.com/category/giesler/

Session 10 – 18 April 2016
The Berlin Memorials to Murdered Minorities
Field trip. Meeting point: Main entrance of the Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas, Cora-Berliner-Straße 1, 10117 Berlin (behind the US embassy)

Second short paper (500 – 800 words) due

Session 11 – 25 April 2016
Discussion of the two preceding field trips
Divided Berlin
Read for Class:
Christa Wolf: *They Divided the Sky [Der geteilte Himmel, 1963]*, chapters 1-9, 24-30 (see NYU Classes).

Office hour before and after class to discuss the short papers

Session 12 – 29 April 2016 (2-4.45 pm!!!)
The Fall of the Wall
Read for class:
Sven Regener: *Berlin Blues* (2001) (read all)

Session 13 – 2 May 2016
Unified Berlin
Read for class:
Katharina Gerstenberger: *Writing the New Berlin: The German Capital in Post-Wall Literature* (2008), chapter 1 (see NYU Classes).

**Session 14 – 9 May 2016**  
**Immigrants in Berlin I – German-Turkish Literature**  
Read for class:  

**Final paper due**

**Session 15 – 13 May 2016 (Make-up Day)**  
**Immigrants in Berlin II – German-Russian Literature / Goodbye to Berlin? Retrospection and Prospect**  
Read for class:  

Students assess what they have learned in the course and during their stay in Berlin.

Office hour before and after the session to discuss the final papers

**Classroom Etiquette**  
It is indispensable that the students engage in the discussions of and offer ideas on the texts, films or images which need to be thoroughly prepared prior the to respective classroom meeting. Only by actively discussing the issues at stake can the students develop the ability to critically measure and appreciate a text’s/film’s/image’s potentials. In other words, the students’ active classroom participation (answering questions, offering their thoughts and discussing the issue at stake) is crucial to the success of the class. As a consequence, the students’ classroom activity counts for 20% of the overall grade in this course.

Electronic devices of any kind may not be used during class.

**Your Instructor**  
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Neuber teaches German Literature at Freie Universität Berlin; he was Visiting Professor of Literature at NYU Abu Dhabi from 2010-2015 and taught three J-Terms (2013-2015) at NYU Berlin.  
[http://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/we04/institut/mitarbeiter/neuber/index.html](http://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/we04/institut/mitarbeiter/neuber/index.html)