Course title: German History 1871 to Present (in English)
Course code: HIST 3001 BRGE (ENG)
Programs offering course: Global Architecture and Design, Semester Global Internship, Berlin Open Campus Block
Open Campus Track: Language, Literature, and Culture
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring Block I 2021

Course Description

This course covers the eventful and tumultuous decades of German history after the founding of the federal monarchy in 1871. Students study the Prussian kingdom and German Empire, World War I, and the collapse of the monarchy. The promise and failings of the Weimar Republic will be examined in the context of the rising political extremes of communism and fascism that gave way to the terror of Hitler and the Nazi Party. The course analyzes World War II, including the Holocaust and complete defeat of Germany, and the 40 years of occupation and division of the country during the Cold War. Finally, the course examines the 1989 “peaceful revolution,” the fall of the Berlin Wall, and Germany’s reunification.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Propose and answer critical and analytical questions about significant cultural, social, and political moments in German history to the present
- Analyze primary and secondary sources
- Formulate arguments and defend them in class discussion and written assignments
- Argue historical interpretations with clarity and precision in written and oral contexts

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

This course is taught through lecture, discussions, small group and / or individual assignments. The material used in this course will include a combination of primary sources (speeches, laws, images, videos, works of philosophy and fiction), secondary sources (articles or book chapters), films, and site visits. Students will have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of a specific event / period through the final project, which is an historical analysis of a cultural-historical artifact.

In this course, we will focus on the political, social / cultural, and military trends that led to the two World Wars and culminated in Germany’s absolute defeat – and how the two post-war German states responded to, accounted for, and attempted to move away from their destructive history. How and why did Germany end up unleashing catastrophic violence in Europe and the world not once, but twice, by the middle of the 20th century? Topics to be discussed include: liberalism, conservatism, political parties, imperialism, anti-Semitism, nationalism, revolution, and memorialization. We will also consider the theoretical stances that underlie different narratives of German history, e.g. continuity vs. rupture, the ideas of causality and contingency. For just as it is insufficient to claim that one cannot comprehend how, for example, the Holocaust happened, it is just as insufficient to argue that it was bound to happen.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Midterm Exam 20%
2. Response Papers 20%
Course Requirements

Midterm Exam

Each exam will consist of short ID questions and an essay. The short IDs will be in-class; the essay will be a timed, out-of-class assignment. Students may not collaborate on the essays.

Response Papers

Students will complete four short writing assignments (of 400 words each) related to a primary source. In some weeks these will be print sources or images; in other weeks they will be site-related. Specific instructions will be distributed for each assignment.

Abstract & Rough Draft of Final Paper

Final Paper (final version following peer review)

For their final paper, students will select a cultural-historical artifact such as a novel, a building, a memorial site, a film, a work of art, or a museum or part thereof (or another source, in consultation with the instructor). In approximately 1500 words (double-spaced, Chicago Style citations), students will analyze their chosen artifact with regard to the themes covered in the course, bringing it into dialogue with historical scholarship (including at least 3 scholarly sources). Students must submit a proposal for this project no later than the end of the second week of the course. We will spend class time discussing writing strategies, style, and form, as well as proper use of citations; we will also spend class time workshopping drafts. Drafts and peer review all count toward the final grade. In the final class session, students will have the opportunity to give a brief presentation on their project. Further instructions (including examples of artifacts) will be distributed separately; the paper will be due in Week 5. Students will abide by the CIEE policy on academic integrity. All written work submitted as part of this course is expected to be the student’s original work, which has not been submitted for a grade at CIEE or at the student’s home institution. Plagiarism may result in a failing grade for the assignment.

Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.
Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Total Course Hours Missed</th>
<th>Minimum Penalty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 – 20%</td>
<td>Participation graded as per class requirements; 3% grade penalty &amp; written warning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion</td>
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N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Class: 1.1 Introduction**

Topics: Course and Syllabus review; German Unification, the culture wars, and the Wilhelmine state.

Reading:


**Class: 1.2 The German Empire & Realpolitik**

Topics: Realpolitik, its failure, and German overseas colonialism

Reading:


**Week 2**

**Class: 2.1 Industrialism & War**

World War I

Topics: Role of nationalism, industrialization in international politics prior to WWI

Reading:

**Week 3**

**Class: 3.1 The Weimar Republic**

**The Weimar Republic I**

Topics: Modernization and its tensions


**Class: 3.2 Co-Curricular Excursion**

Reichstag Building

**Week 4**

**Class: 4.1 Modern Anti-Semitism, National Socialism, and World War II**

**National-Socialist Ideology**

Topics: Structure and development of the Nazi State; role of individuals in massacres and round-ups of Jews for deportation to death camps

Reading:


**Class: 4.2 Nazi Persecution of the Jews**

Topics: Jewish life in Germany

Reading:


**Week 5**

**Class: 5.1 Total War - "Hour Zero"?**

**World War II**

Topics: The end of the war and the founding of the post-war states

Reading:

Mary Fulbrook, *The People’s State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), Chapters 1, 2, 8, 13

**Class: 5.2 Co-Curricular Excursion**

Hohenschönhausen Stasi Memorial

**Week 6**

**Class: 6.1 Remembering the Past, Looking to the Future**

**Ripples in the Social Fabric**

Topics: Memory, Pluralism, and Violence in Post-WW2 Germany

Reading:
Class: 6.2 Conclusion

Final discussion and presentation of final paper topics

**Final Paper Due**

**Course Materials**

**Readings**


Arden Pennell, "Why are they all so happy?“ telos Vol. 2008, No. 144, pp. 95-105.
