Germany in the Twentieth Century

Michael Dean
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00pm, or by appointment, 2305 Dwinelle
Class meetings: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 12:00pm-1:00pm, 180 Tan Hall

Course Description

Two themes dominate the history of modern Germany. “On the one hand there is the pursuit of economic and technological progress, [...] on the other hand there is the pursuit of warfare on a hitherto unimagined scale,” writes one historian. This tension between fantastic growth and catastrophic destruction has shaped—or better said, has violently wrought—the history of Germany and Europe in the 20th century. In this course we will explore the relation between these two contradictory yet intricately bound processes. Why did a country renowned for its humanistic scholarship and possessing one of the world’s most advanced economies unleash history’s two deadliest conflicts? How did this same country, shunned by the civilized world, then transform itself into a model democracy and symbol of economic stability? Does the dialectic of growth and destruction continue to haunt Central Europe today?

These and other questions will be explored through the analysis of historical texts, films and recent scholarship as we examine the very different reactions of ordinary Germans to the common challenges of the 20th century.
**Readings**

In addition to the readings mentioned below, I may occasionally assign and distribute other interesting essays, source materials, and book extracts for study and discussion based on the needs of the course. They will be posted in bCourses and/or distributed in class at least a week prior to the class session for which they are to be read. This means that the exact schedule of readings and written assignments is based on the evolution of the course and is subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to have prepared for each session accordingly. All assigned reading is to be completed by the beginning of each lecture.

**Required reading list**

The following books are available for purchase at the UCB bookstore, at local new and used bookstores, and online.

- Course reader available for purchase at Zee Zee Copy (2431 Durant Ave., located in the passageway between Bancroft and Durant).

**Films**

In addition to the readings listed above, students are required to view the following three films:

- *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari* (1920) by Robert Wiene, Hans Janowitz and Carl Mayer
- *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1979) by Rainer Werner Fassbinder

Screenings of the films are tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, September 16; Wednesday, November 4; and Wednesday, November 18, from 6:00pm to 8:00pm (I will notify you about the specific location as soon as possible.) In addition to the assigned readings, these films will be the basis for in-class discussions and exam questions. Any student unable to attend the scheduled screening is expected to inform me about this in advance and should arrange to watch the film on her/his own. (All of the films are available from the Moffitt media center and easily found online or at your local VHS rental facility.)
COMMUNICATION

The most efficient way to communicate with me outside of class is by email. From time to time I may communicate with the class via e-mail or through bCourses, so please check your university email on a daily basis. Claiming that you did not receive an email is not an excuse for not responding appropriately to new course information. I encourage you all to make use of office hours if you have any questions about the course or other concerns.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance

Attendance is required. Students who miss more than three sessions may receive a reduced final grade for the course. Students who miss more than five sessions may fail the course. NOTE: We come together in order to study; all other activities such as eating, reading newspapers, using cell phones, browsing the internet etc. do not have a place in the classroom.

Classroom Participation

You are encouraged to engage in the learning process actively by developing your own questions and considering the perspectives of fellow classmates. One of the most important things you can do to be successful in this course is to come to class, in particular to in-class discussions, after having carefully read and thought about the assigned readings. Since I will be conducting this course interactively, it is imperative that you complete the readings for the day they are assigned. In the course of class discussions or during lecture, I may ask you to compose—and submit—short written responses to the readings or the ongoing lecture. These responses will be factored into your final grade.

NOTE: If you miss a classroom discussion due to illness or any other approved absence, you will have the option to prepare a written response to the assigned readings to improve your participation grade. If you are considering this option, please consult with me in advance about the details.

Exams

There will be three exams in this course, two midterms and a final. For the midterms you will be given a study sheet of around 10 questions, five of which you will be required to answer during an in-class examination. The midterm will also include a short in-class essay. The final exam will include 10 questions and a short essay. Please keep in mind that the exams will draw from the entire course’s material.
Writing Assignment: The “Three Generations” Project

This project, adapted from the “Creating Lives” project devised by Stanford colleagues, asks you to create the fictional biography of a family spanning the history of twentieth-century Germany. A detailed worksheet and set of instructions will be provided at the end of week three. This web-based project requires that you submit 10 short writing assignments (around 250-300 words each) to the bCourses website as well as a final paper of about four or five pages. Please familiarize yourself with bCourses if you have not done so already—I am trying to catch up myself!

Grades

This course is designed to give students a unique view into the history of modern Germany. Course assignments aim to help students improve their critical thinking, reading, and writing skills, as well as to foster the ability to formulate intriguing questions and engage with other viewpoints in a positive and productive manner.

Student evaluation will be based on:

Attendance and Classroom Participation (10% of final grade)

Midterm Exams (30% of final grade)

Final Exam (30% of final grade)

The “Three Generations” Project (30% of final grade)

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent her or him from fully demonstrating her or his abilities, or who wishes to share emergency medical information with me should contact me privately after class or at my office as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate educational opportunities.

Class Schedule

The Legacies of Empire, Germany to 1918

We, 26 Aug Course introduction

Fr, 28 Aug German Questions

Fulbrook, A History of Germany 1918-2014, Chapter 1

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Course Content</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Mo, 31 Aug</td>
<td><strong>Belongings, 1866-1890</strong></td>
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<td>We, 2 Sept</td>
<td><strong>Entanglements, 1880-1914</strong></td>
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<td>Fr, 5 Sept</td>
<td><strong>The Road to War</strong></td>
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<td>Mo, 7 Sept</td>
<td><strong>Holiday, no lecture</strong></td>
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<td>We, 9 Sept</td>
<td><strong>Germany at War, 1914-1918</strong></td>
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<td>Fr, 11 Sept</td>
<td><strong>In-Class Discussion:</strong></td>
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<td>The “Three Generations” Project</td>
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**THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC, 1918-1933**

| Mo, 14 Sept | **The Weimar Republic, 1918-1923: New Directions**                                                                  |
| We, 16 Sept| **No lecture – make time for the film!**                                                                             |
|            | *Film screening (time and place tba): *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*                                                 |
**Fr, 18 Sept**  **The Weimar Republic, 1924-1928: Deceptive Stability**  

*Due: Diary entry #1 posted to bCourses*

**Mo, 21 Sept**  **The Weimar Republic, 1929-1933: Years of Crisis**


**We, 23 Sept**  **In-Class Discussion:**

*Gender, Culture and Violence in the Weimar Republic*

Keun, *The Artificial Silk Girl*


**Fr, 25 Sept**  **Nazism and Hitler’s Rise to Power, 1919-1933**

Bergen, *War and Genocide*, Chapter 2

*Due: Diary entry #2 posted to bCourses*

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**NATIONAL SOCIALIST GERMANY, 1933-1945**

**Mo, 28 Sept**  **MIDTERM I**

**We, 30 Sept**  **Who belongs … (The “National Community”)**


Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918-2014*, Chapter 4

**Fr, 2 Oct**  **… and who doesn’t. (Repression under Nazi Rule, 1933-1939)**


*Due: Diary entry #3 posted to bCourses*

**Mo, 5 Oct**  **Defining the “Racial Enemy”**

Bergen, *War and Genocide*, Chapter 1

“The Reich Citizenship Law (September 15, 1935) and the First Regulation to the Reich Citizenship Law (November 14, 1935), *German Historical Documents and

We, 7 Oct  Hitler’s Pre-War Foreign Policy
Bergen, War and Genocide, Chapter 4

Fr, 9 Oct  War ….
Bergen, War and Genocide, Chapter 5 and 6
*Due: Diary entry #4 posted to bCourses*

Mo, 12 Oct  … Extermination and Defeat
Bergen, War and Genocide, Chapter 7 and 8
Fulbrook, A History of Germany 1918-2014, Chapter 5

We, 14 Oct  No Class

Fr, 16 Oct  Class Discussion:
Europe and the Holocaust
Kertesz, Fatelessness
*Due: Diary entry #5 posted to bCourses*

FROM “ZERO HOUR” TO REUNIFICATION, 1945-1990

Mo, 19 Oct  00:00
Bergman, War and Genocide, Conclusion
Fulbrook, A History of Germany 1918-2014, Chapter 6

We, 21 Oct  Topic to be announced

Fr, 23 Oct  Crystallization and Consolidation
Fulbrook, A History of Germany 1918-2014, Chapter 7
*Due: Diary entry #6 posted to bCourses*

Mo, 26 Oct  Transformation and the “Established Phase”
Fulbrook, A History of Germany 1918-2014, Chapter 8
We, 28 Oct  Capitalism vs. Communism: Society, State, and Economy in the Cold War Era
Fulbrook, *A History of Germany 1918-2014*, Chapters 9 and 10

Fr, 30 Oct  Dissent and Opposition in the Two Germanies
*Due: Diary entry #7 posted to bCourses*

Mo, 2 Nov  Coming to Terms with the Past

We, 4 Nov  No lecture – make time for the film!
*Film screening (time and place tba): *The Marriage of Maria Braun*

Fr, 6 Nov  **Class Discussion:**

Privacy and Private Life in the Two Germanies
Böll, *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*
*Due: Diary entry #8 posted to bCourses*

Mo, 9 Nov  **MIDTERM II**

We, 11 Nov  Academic and administrative holiday, no lecture

Fr, 13 Nov  Reunification …
“How the Wall was Cracked,” *New York Times*, November 19, 1989
*Due: Diary entry #9 posted to bCourses*

Mo, 16 Nov  … and its Discontents
Stefan Heym, “Ash Wednesday in the GDR,” *New German Critique*, no. 52, Special Issue on German Reunification (Winter 1991): 31-35.

Karl Heinz Bohrer, “Why We are Not a Nation, and Why We Should Become One,” *New German Critique*, no. 52, Special Issue on German Reunification (Winter 1991): 72-83.

Jürgen Habermas, “Yet Again: German Identity: A Unified Nation of Angry DM-Burghers?” *New German Critique*, no. 52, Special Issue on German Reunification (Winter 1991): 84-101


*Due: Diary entry #10 posted to bCourses*

**NEW GERMAN QUESTIONS, 1990 TO THE PRESENT**

**We, 18 Nov**  No lecture – Make time for the film!

*Film screening (time and place tba): *The White Ribbon*

**Fr, 20 Nov**  The Berlin Republic

Fulbrook, *A History of Germany*, Chapter 14


**Mo, 23 Nov**  The Berlin Republic (cont.)

Fulbrook, *A History of Germany*, Chapter 15

**We, 25 Nov**  Non-instructional day, no class

**Fr, 27 Nov**  Academic and administrative holiday, no class

**Mo, 30 Nov**  No Class

**We, 2 Dec**  A German Europe?

Readings to be announced

**Fr, 4 Dec**  In-Class Discussion:

New German Questions


*Due before class: “Three Generations” Project final paper, submitted to bCourses*

**Fr, 18 Dec**  *Final exam*