



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

Germ 317.8
Traveling Germany
Fall 2019
TR 12.30-13:45
Room: SA 235

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Jan Süselbeck

OFFICE LOCATION: CHC 118

OFFICE HOURS: by appointment

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 403-220-7316

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DESCRIPTION

In this seminar, you will learn about German history and culture in the 19th, 20th and 21th century from the fictional or journalistic perspective of outsiders and foreign correspondents travelling the country. The semester kicks off with excerpts from Mark Twain's famous German travelogue from the 19th century. Next, we will read and analyze travel reports of British or American intellectuals visiting the „Third Reich“ (1933-1945). These fascinating and bizarre reports will provide you with observant, critical and thoughtful views on the things happening in everyday life of that terrible time which has much to tell us to avoid committing similar mistakes in our own future.

Apart from that, this course introduces you to most different genres. This is why we also will read travel reports of the ‚scandalous‘ Austrian writer Thomas Bernhard (1931-1989), describing comical breakdowns during German awards ceremonies he attended since the 1960s as a honored writer. Coming to Germany to receive his literary prizes awarded to him by German cultural institutions in different cities, Bernhard tells about his impressions of these ‚horrible‘ German places he visits, gathering his polemic thoughts about the literary scene in this neighboring country.

Not least, we will take a closer look at observations of contemporary Germany written by bestselling German-Jewish writer Wladimir Kaminer from Russia, who is living and working in Berlin, and at travel reports by American-Jewish writer Tuvia Tenenbom from New York, whose critical views on today's Germans garnered much attention. **The seminar is taught in English; no German language skills are required.**

OBJECTIVES

This course aims at teaching how to analyze different perspectives on German culture and history from the 19th to the 20th century. The way to do that is to learn how to critically and thoughtfully read texts without getting distracted, and to discuss your observations during our meetings.

OUTCOMES

Students will learn to analyze most different literary, journalistic and historical texts. They will be introduced to academic methods of interpreting historical sources and literary texts. They will get an overview of German history and culture from the 19th to the 21st century.



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DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES

Presentation (25 %)
Attendance / participation / text responses ("tickets to class") (25 %)
8-Pages Paper (25 %)
Take Home Exam (25 %)

GRADING SCALE

A+ (97-100 %), **A** (91-96%), **A-** (86-91)
B+ (81-85%), **B** (76-80%), **B-** (71-75)
C+ (67-70%), **C** (62-66%), **C-** (58-61%)
D+ (54-57%), **D** (50-53%), **F** (0-49 %)

REQUIRED TEXTS

Thomas Bernhard: My Prizes. An Accounting. New York 2010.

Students can purchase the ebook directly from the third-party ebook vendors (Amazon, Google books, iBooks etc.) listed on the publishers website. These ebook formats are not compatible with our library ebook platforms.

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/12755/my-prizes-by-thomas-bernhard/9780307594235/>

Wladimir Kaminer: Russian Disco. Tales of Everyday Lunacy on the streets of Berlin. Ebury Press 2009.

Students can purchase the ebook directly from the third-party ebook vendors (Amazon, Google books, iBooks etc.) listed on the publishers website. These ebook formats are not compatible with our library ebook platforms.

<https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/1021162/russian-disco/9781448176175.html>

Oliver Lubrich (Ed.): Travels in the Reich, 1933-1945. Foreign Authors Report from Germany. The University of Chicago Press 2010. This title should be available at the UofC Bookstore.

Tuvia Tenenbom: I Sleep in Hitler's Room. An American Jew Visits Germany. New York 2011.

The ebook version is now available here:

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=799730>

Additional texts will be made accessible online or as pdfs

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

COURSE NOTES

All numbers about the page lengths of assignments refer to the layout: double spaced, font Times / Times New Roman 12, 1 inch margins.

Attendance and **Participation** are the key factors of this class. Participation means **active engagement** in the activities of the class (with your ideas you improve the discussions for everybody); it is based on thorough readings of the assigned texts and other homework assignments. Attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade. The quality of the sessions will depend upon your preparedness and willingness to engage with each other. Please note that you do not have to have understood everything you have read to make a valuable contribution. Expressing doubts, disagreements,



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and asking for clarification is a useful way of contributing to discussion. Your class participation mark will be based on the quality rather than the quantity of your contribution. Also, it is essential that all participants treat each other with respect and courtesy. Students who feel unable to actively engage in classroom discussion must bring their concerns to the instructor's attention early so that an alternative strategy to ensure adequate performance can be sought. Unexplained absences will be penalized up to a loss of a full letter on the final grade. Also, please don't use electronic devices during class except for accessing digital copies of the required texts on a reading device, as using computers or cell phones for other purposes might distract yourself as well as those around you.

Updated reading (for example of theoretical texts or interpretations), homework as well as **schedule changes** will be announced in class, on D2L or via e-mail.

Missed presentations, missed tests, missed deadlines: Expected to contact the instructor *prior* to the missed class / deadline in order to reschedule the presentation (phone / email) or in order to ask for an extension.

The Ticket to Class tests the students' understanding of the assigned readings. You may be asked to

- a) come up with a good written question based on the reading
- b) respond to a question or issue raised by the reading
- c) provide the class with informations about the authors and their texts to be read

8-pages paper: This paper should be written on one of the readings discussed in class. Topics can be creatively developed and must be planned in a personal meeting with the instructor before midterm.

Papers are due on December 5th (last class meeting of the semester). Suggestions for possible paper topics will be provided as well. If you are a major or graduate student in our German programs, you are encouraged to write in German; if you are not a native speaker, this will of course be taken into account. At the discretion of the instructor, a paper submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

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Take Home Exam: You will be required to write one *Take Home Exam*. It will be about one of the texts discussed in this class, or an aspect of these works. These take away exams will be given to you during the last meeting of the semester and are due on **December 12, 2019**.

Writing skills statement: All writings assignments will be marked according to content, form, analysis, and originality as well as clarity of writing including grammar, spelling, and organization. To improve your writing skills, contact the Effective Writing Centre: https://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing_support/overview.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."



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Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it. Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy>.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>).

Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.



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In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca

Website: arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

A link to required information that is not course-specific related to student wellness and safety resources, can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>.