



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

GERM 699
Conference Course (Laughter in Literature)
Winter 2021
Times to be determined. (Synchronous meetings via Zoom)
COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Martin Wagner

OFFICE HOURS: Remotely, by appointment via email.

E-MAIL: martin.wagner@ucalgary.ca (You may expect a response within 48 hours, weekends excluded.)

TELEPHONE NUMBER: I currently don't have access to my office phone. Phone calls and Zoom meetings can be arranged via email.

DESCRIPTION

This course explores the cultural meaning of laughter across European history, with a specific focus on the representation of laughter in German-language theory and, especially, literature of the time around 1900. The course combines case studies in literary texts from the time around 1900 with recent scholarship on laughter in literature from antiquity to present. Building on this work, students develop their own research projects. Class discussions will be in English. For texts written in German, we will refer to the original language. Assignments can be written in either German or English.

OBJECTIVES

- Familiarize students with recent scholarship on the literary representation of laughter across cultures and historical periods and provide an in-depth look at the debates about laughter in German literature, psychology, and cultural theory around 1900.
- Improve students' understanding of the ways in which literary studies can contribute to studies in cultural history.
- Improve students' ability to form their own research questions in relation to the existing scholarship, and to present their work in oral and written form according to professional standards.

OUTCOMES

- Students are trained to explore and understand cultural history through literature.
- Students know how to situate their research in the existing scholarship and how to write a successful academic paper.
- Students are able to draw on clear guidelines to give an effective oral presentation.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

The course readings will be determined in consultation with the students at the first meeting.

RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

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COURSE NOTES

- Instructor and students will meet on a weekly basis to discuss readings and the students' writing assignments (details to be confirmed).
- Meetings will be conducted remotely via Zoom and will not be recorded.



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Technology Requirements:

As per the requirements, students need to have reliable access to technology, as follows:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Stable internet connection.

Additionally, a webcam/camera (built-in or external) is highly recommended.

ASSESSMENT

- Statement of intent for final paper: 5%
- Commented literature list: 15%
- Draft of final paper: 10%
- Final paper: 40%
- Presentation: 10%
- Preparation and participation: 20%

- **Statement of intent for final paper (250 words):** Early on in the semester, students write a brief statement, indicating which topic they wish to work on in their research project. This statement should offer a rationale for this choice and speculate about important questions and hypotheses that will guide the research project.

- **Commented literature list:** Students prepare a commented literature list with relevant literature for their research project. The list should contain at least five academic articles or books. Students are asked to provide for at least three titles short explanations (of about 250 words each) in which they summarize the content of the respective text and explain the text's relevance for their research project.

- **Draft of final paper (4,000 words, +/-10 %):** Students will write a draft of the final paper and receive feedback by the instructor before writing the final version of the paper. The draft will be graded based only on formalities (length of paper; inclusion of title, literature list, introduction [with thesis statement], and conclusion).

- **Final paper (4,000 words, +/-10 %):** As the culmination of their research throughout the semester, students write a final paper. The paper will be assessed based on the following criteria:
 - o Construction of argument (20/40): Does the paper have a clear and specific thesis statement (5)? Does the paper have a meaningful introduction and conclusion (5)? Does the paper productively discuss counterarguments (5)? Are the transitions between sentences and paragraphs clear (5)?
 - o Productive and nuanced work with primary and secondary sources (10/40): Is the paper clearly situated within the existing scholarship on the topic (3)? Does the paper provide evidence for its claims by clear references to primary and/or secondary sources (3)? Does the paper introduce quotations with sufficient clarity (2)? Does the paper include a nuanced discussion of the cited texts (2)?
 - o Clarity of writing and form (10/40): Is there a consistent and transparent citation system (2)? Does the essay comply with standard English grammar and spelling (2)? Is the paper stylistically appropriate (2)? Does the paper have a descriptive and well-suited title (2)? Is the paper correctly formatted (a Word document, using 12 point Times New Roman and double-spacing) (2).

Please note: The grade will be lowered by 1 point for every 100 words that the paper deviates from the required word count.



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- **Presentation (15 minutes):** In their presentation, students showcase their final paper to the class. Students will prepare a PowerPoint Presentation for the group. Grades will be based on the clarity of the presentation (what is the thesis, how is the thesis argued for, and why does the paper matter?), the presentation materials (slides), as well as on the student's ability to respond to questions and comments.
- **Preparation and participation:** Students are asked to participate in class discussions and to come to class with questions and comments related to the assigned readings. To receive a perfect grade, students are asked to make 20 contributions over the course of the semester (in the form of well-developed questions, comments etc.). Students may choose to supplement their contributions with short reflective statements (c. 250 words each) about individual class meetings. Each of these statements will be worth up to 3 points (to achieve a perfect score, the writing must be clear, and the statement must demonstrate familiarity with the content of the assigned reading or class discussion). Please email these statements to the instructor no later than 48 hours after the meeting on which they comment.

PLEASE NOTE:

- **All written assignments should be submitted to the instructor via email. Please use Word documents for all written assignments.**
- **For each 24 hours that an assignment is late, one point will be deducted. Please reach out to the instructor prior to the due date to arrange accommodations if appropriate.**
- **Any assignment that is not submitted will be graded at zero points.**

GRADING SCALE

A+ (97-100%), **A** (92-96%), **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%)

INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

All members of the University community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Statement on Principles of Conduct, and to comply with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures (available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

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."

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



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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.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. 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://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

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.

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



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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

Links to 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>.