Florida Atlantic University

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

Course title: GET 3956 Berlin: Culture and Society

Instructor: Dr. Evelyn Trotter
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Time: Summer 2016, Term 3 (June 29- Aug 9):
Jun 29-Jun 30 online
Jul 01-Jul 31 in Berlin
Aug 1-9 online

Language of instruction: English

Contact hours: 45 minimum, M-R or F daily/weekly schedule may vary

Credits: 3

Cross listed: The course is cross listed with GER 3952 Experience Berlin!
German Conversation in Literature and Urban Sites

Course description

The course explores the culture of past and present Berlin through its culture, society, history, literature, urban sites and relevant cultural events. Special attention is given to the multi-faceted interconnections of history, literature, culture and society. Diverse cultural substructures such as literature, film, architecture, music, and visual arts are examined through literary subjective memory and public objective reminders.

With Berlin as the classroom, students will have first hand experience of the city’s present day cultural life and simultaneously be able to explore the cultural commemoration of its past. The analysis of pertinent literary readings will deepen this experience.

Course procedure
This six-week summer course is taught for the first and last weeks online. The entire course is divided into 6 weekly units. Each week will focus on a different era in the history of Berlin, beginning with Prussian and Imperial *Wilhelmine* Berlin (units I and II online), followed by Unit III, Weimar Republic, Unit IV, Third Reich, unit V divided Germany and ending with Unit VI, post fall of the wall present day Berlin introduced in week 5 and completed online in week 6. Each week will include an overview of the historical period and an examination of the various dominant cultural themes of that era. Students will read short relevant literary selections, 1-2 novels, one cultural text and some short background texts on Berlin history and society followed by excursions within Berlin to the pertinent cultural sites and institutions. All students will meet for weekly class discussions/lectures scheduled Tuesdays for approximately 2.5 TBA AM hours [and depending on special circumstances alternatively on Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursdays TBA AM or PM hours.] Weekly mandatory and/or voluntary film screenings will be announced at TBA times during the week. Weekly mandatory and voluntary excursions are subject to change depending on special circumstances.

This course is recommended for anyone interested in German literature, culture, and society, including students in European studies, communications, history, political science, theater studies, or visual arts.

**Course objectives:**

- Students will gain a thorough understanding of Berlin culture, past and present.
- Students will be introduced to German literary and cinematic trends
- Students will develop an appreciation for the intersection of German beliefs, ideas, and modes of expression across various cultural areas
- Students will be able to apply the course content to their own personal experience

**Prerequisites**

None

**Course Requirements:**

**Weekly Quizzes (6)** 30%

**Online assignment** 5%

**Keeping a journal** 15%

**Class/excursions participation** 30%

**A final project** 20%

**Weekly quizzes**
Each quiz will test the student’s knowledge of the assigned course readings and facts the student should know from the excursions; the questions will focus on objective factual knowledge but may include some interpretative questions. If you attend the class discussions and excursions and have read the literary assignments, you will be well prepared.

**Online assignment**

This will be a scavenger hunt in two parts due by June 30!

**Keeping a journal**

In this journal the student will document reflections on assigned readings and films, visited sites etc. but particularly will document her/his personal and individual “Berlin experience” within the 4 weeks in Berlin.

**Class participation**

Required daily M-R on a flexible timetable; students must attend all scheduled class meetings and announced required excursions. More than 3 unexcused absences (from class meetings and/or required excursions) will result in a 1/2 letter grade drop; for example, a student who has earned an “A” but has missed more than 3 unexcused absences would received an “A-“.

**Final project**

The topic must be on one of the historical units discussed in class and ideally includes an interview with at least two Berlin residents and their perspective on this era in history. The project can be in various formats: a research paper, a literary text, as a video or audio documentation, a visual essay combining text and photography, a performance piece, etc.; more detailed and exact requirement guidelines will be discussed at our first meeting

**Required texts (tentative)**


Regener, Sven  *Herr Lehmann/Berlin Blues.*

*Reader (selected short texts and poems) TBA* ONLINE

*These are supplemental texts to enrich your understanding of the course content but with a few exceptions are not mandatory readings

**Suggested Readings:** In progress

Kleist, *Prince of Homburg* (reader)


Walter Benjamin *A childhood around 1900* (reader)
Joseph Roth *What I saw* (reader)
Deutschkron, Inge. *Ich trug den gelben Stern/Outcast*
Brecht selected texts (reader)
Dishereit, Esther (*Joeml*, Reader)
Selected poems by Benn, Kaleko and more (reader)
Fulbrook, Mary *A concise History of Germany.*
Doeblin *Berlin Alexanderplatz*
Fallada, *Kleiner Mann was nun?/Little Man what now*
Fallada, *Every Man dies Alone/Jeder stirbt fuer sich allein ONLINE*
Fontane: *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg (Gruenderjahre)*
*Summerhouse, Later.* By Judith Hermann, transl. by Margot Bettauer Dembo, Flamingo: Ecco 2002 (era post-Wende)*

*Russian Disco* by Wladimir Kaminer. (post Wende)
*Heroes Like us, Brussig*
Honigmann, *Love made of Nothing.* (GDR; Jewish)
Kaeestner, *Emil and die Detektive*
*Senocak, Zafer, Perilous Kinship*
Isherwood, Christopher *Berlin Stories.*

**Films TBA and suggested**
Ode to freedom
Any movie by Leni Riefenstahl
Emil and the Detectives
M
Metropolis
Cabaret
Aimee and Jaguar
Rosenstrasse
Comedian Harmonists
Lola runs
Himmel über Berlin
Goodbye Lenin
Lives of Others
Barbara,
Oh Boy and more