

# GERMAN 3300 CONTEMPORARY GERMAN SPEAKING CULTURES

## FALL 2013

Instructor: Dr. Claudia Schwabe  
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Class hours: MWF 1:00-1:50 p.m.  
Class room: Old Main 301  
Office hours: MW 2:00-3:00 p.m.  
(and by appointment)

### Course Objectives and Goals:

This course provides a multidisciplinary examination of current trends in contemporary cultures in Germany. During the first half of the semester, the emphasis will be on Germany's organizational structures, Germany as a multicultural society, questions of intercultural identity, gender aspects, and on related minority cultural discourse. Furthermore, we will look at various facets of popular and youth culture in Germany, including fashion styles, German cuisine, sports, leisure activities, and lifestyles. In the second half of the semester the focus will be on exploring both familiar and lesser-known aspects of German entertainment and media culture, including television, music, film, performing arts, literature, as well as on visual arts, architecture, and Germany's production and consumption culture. In addition to reading German newspapers, magazines, brochures, and literary texts, there will be background lectures on socio-political, economic, and historical developments. Students will watch, listen to, and discuss German television shows, commercial advertisements, musical recordings, radio broadcasts, and interviews with native speakers, and thus gain a unique access to a significant dimension of German popular culture. Coursework will specifically advance oral and written proficiency in the German language. The class will be conducted primarily in German. Students will write four short position papers, give two in-class presentations, take one midterm exam, and one final exam. Attendance and participation, as integral parts of the class, are expected and will be noted daily.

**Language of instruction:** German

**Required Texts:** Hyde Flippo, *When In Germany, Do As The Germans Do*  
Catherine Fraser & Dierk Hoffmann, *Pop Culture Germany!*

**Course requirements:** Active class participation (incl. homework assignments)  
2 in-class presentations in German  
4 position papers in German (2 pages/ 600 words)  
Midterm exam  
Final exam

<b>Grading:</b>	Class participation	15%
	Presentations	20%
	Position papers	20%
	Midterm exam	20%
	Final exam	25%

## **Learning Objectives:**

Based on the IDEA evaluation system, the following objectives apply most closely to this course:

- Developing skills in expressing oneself orally or in writing
- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
- Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual-cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)

## **Semester Outline (Subject to Change):**

### **Week 1: Course Introduction**

August 26: Modern German Cultures  
August 28: Language, Script, and Gestures  
August 30: Stereotypes and Prejudices

### **Week 2: German Idiosyncrasies**

September 2: LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)  
September 4: Symbols and Memorials  
September 6: Health Issues and Sexuality

### **Week 3: Official Organizational Structures**

September 9: The Social Net  
September 11: The Political System  
September 13: The Legal System

### **Week 4: Official Organizational Structures**

September 16: The Educational System (POSITION PAPER 1 DUE)  
September 18: The German Army  
September 20: The Role of Religion

### **Week 5: Youth Culture & Fashion Culture**

September 23: Fashion  
September 25: Lifestyle and Daily Life  
September 27: Youth Culture

### **Week 6: Social Aspects & Intercultural Identity**

September 30: Gender Equality & Social Issues  
October 2: Multicultural Society & Minorities  
October 4: Food Culture & International Cuisine

### **Week 7: Leisure & Game Culture**

October 7: Activities and Clubs (POSITION PAPER 2 DUE)  
October 9: Holidays and Local Festivals  
October 11: Vacations and Travel

**Week 8: Sport Culture**

October 14: Sports

October 16: **MIDTERM EXAM**

October 18: FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)

**Week 9: Print Media & Children's Media Culture**

October 21: Publishers and The Press

October 23: Popular and Belletristic Literature

October 25: Children's Media Culture

**Week 10: Entertainment Media Culture**

October 28: Radio

October 30: Television

November 1: Film

**Week 11: Digital Age & Celebrity Culture**

November 4: The Internet and Social Networks (POSITION PAPER 3 DUE)

November 6: Advertising

November 8: Famous People

**Week 12: The Performing Arts**

November 11: Theater and Dance

November 13: German Musical Culture

November 15: Hip Hop Minority Music and Culture

**Week 13: Visual Arts & Architecture**

November 18: Visual Arts

November 20: City Planning and Architecture

November 22: Innovation and Production

**Week 14: Production & Consumption Culture**

November 25 From "Tante Emma Laden" to Shopping Mall (POSITION PAPER 4 DUE)

November 27: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)

November 29: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)

**Week 15: Production & Consumption Culture**

December 2: Consumer Culture versus Green Awareness

December 4: Communication

December 6: Public and Private Transportation

**Week 16:**

December 11: **FINAL EXAM** (Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.-1:20 p.m. in classroom)

**Attendance:**

In accordance with USU policies, regular attendance is expected of all students. As this is a fast-paced and group-oriented method of learning, attendance is mandatory. Attendance means physical as well as mental attendance. Planned absences should be discussed with the instructor beforehand. If you need to be absent due to an

emergency, please notify me at your earliest convenience. Examples of planned absences that are excused are: university duties or trips and required court attendance. Examples of emergency absences that are excused are: serious illness or injury of the student or a close member of the student's family. Medical excuses have to be signed by a physician. Written documentation for excused absences must be provided at your next attendance. All missed work must be completed and handed into to me within one week from the day you return. It is the responsibility of each student to make up missed material. Please get notes from someone else in the class or talk to me during my office hours.

Students should plan to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. I reserve the right to regard constant tardiness (more than twice) as an unexcused absence.

**Excessive unexcused absences (more than three) will result in a lower grade.**

Classroom etiquette will be expected (e.g. students will refrain from reading material not related to class and packing up possessions prior to the end of the lecture). Cell phones are to be turned off before class begins (silent not vibrate). If you feel like an exception is necessary, please see me. There will be no laptop computers allowed in class. Students are encouraged to take thorough notes, participate in class discussion, and ask clarifying questions.

#### **Class Participation & Homework (15%):**

Active participation of the student in class is required. Oral practice of the German language is essential to become comfortable with it and the culture. Homework assignments are part of your final grade. All homework assigned may be collected at any time. If you do not hand in your work on the day it is due or asked for it counts as a 0.

#### **In-class Presentations (20%):**

Each student will give two oral presentations, including one-page handouts for your classmates. I choose the presentation topics. Presentations should not be longer than 10 minutes, but should prove that the student has engaged with and understood the topic, and provide thought-provoking questions for class discussions.

#### **Position Papers (20%):**

Students will be expected to write four position papers (**2 pages, Times New Roman, size 12**) to the topics discussed in class. Criteria for the evaluation of these essays are linguistic proficiency, style, and content.

#### **Physical Impairments:**

If a student has any physical disabilities or other concerns that would require some accommodation on the part of the instructor, these must be made known to the instructor during the FIRST WEEK of the course. Any request for special concerns must be discussed with and approved by the instructor prior to the completion of the fifth day of the semester. Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible.

**Honor Code Policy:**

As stated in The Student Code, "Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to re-enforce the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students." Complete academic honesty is expected in this course. Cheating on exams or plagiarism on written assignments will result in a failing grade and may result in further action according to university policy.