

# GERMAN 3300 CONTEMPORARY GERMAN SPEAKING CULTURES

## FALL 2017

Instructor: Dr. Claudia Schwabe  
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Class hours: MWF 12:30-1:20 p.m.  
Class room: OM 207  
Office hours: M 1:30-2:30 p.m. and by  
appointment

### Course Fees:

The \$24.00 course fee you have paid is used to staff and maintain the Language Lab (MAIN 004) and to pay German teaching assistants who assist instructors in the classroom.

### 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 take weekly reading quizzes, write three position papers, give two in-class presentations, complete one Midterm (German culture project), and take one final written 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)
- Reading quizzes
- 2 in-class presentations in German
- 3 position papers in German (2-3 pages/ 600-800 words)

- Midterm - German Culture Project
- Final exam

**Grading:**

- Class participation 10%
- Reading quizzes 20%
- Presentations 10%
- Position papers 20%
- German Culture Project 20%
- Final exam 20%

**Grading Scale**

|            |            |                               |            |
|------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| A (100-93) | A- (92-90) | B+ (88-89)                    | B (87-83)  |
| B- (82-80) | C+ (79-78) | C (77-73)                     | C- (72-70) |
| D+ (69-68) | D (67-60)  | F represents a grade below 60 |            |

**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 28: Modern German Cultures  
 August 30: Language, Script, and Gestures  
 September 1: Stereotypes and Prejudices

**Week 2: German Idiosyncrasies**

September 4: LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)  
 September 6: Symbols and Memorials  
 September 8: Health Issues and Sexuality

**Week 3: Official Organizational Structures**

September 11: The Social Net (**deadline for midterm culture project approval**)  
 September 13: The Political System  
 September 15: The Legal System

**Week 4: Official Organizational Structures**

September 18: The Educational System (POSITION PAPER 1 DUE)  
 September 20: The German Army  
 September 22: The Role of Religion

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

September 25: Fashion

September 27: Lifestyle and Daily Life  
September 29: Youth Culture

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

October 2: Gender Equality & Social Issues  
October 4: Multicultural Society & Minorities  
October 6: Food Culture & International Cuisine

**Week 7: Leisure & Game Culture**

October 9: **Deadline for midterm culture projects**  
October 11: Activities and Clubs (POSITION PAPER 2 DUE)  
October 13: Holidays and Local Festivals

**Week 8: Sport Culture**

October 16: Vacations and Travel  
October 18: Sports  
October 19: Friday Schedule  
October 20: FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)

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

October 23: Publishers and The Press  
October 25: Popular and Belletristic Literature  
October 27: Children's Media Culture

**Week 10: Entertainment Media Culture**

October 30: Radio  
November 1: Television  
November 3: Film

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

November 6: The Internet and Social Networks  
November 8: Advertising  
November 10: Famous People

**Week 12: The Performing Arts**

November 13: Theater and Dance (POSITION PAPER 3 DUE)  
November 15: German Musical Culture  
November 17: Hip Hop Minority Music and Culture

**Week 13: Visual Arts & Architecture**

November 20: Visual Arts  
November 22: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)  
November 24: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO CLASS)

**Week 14: Production & Consumption Culture**

November 27: City Planning and Architecture  
November 29: Innovation and Production  
December 1: From "Tante Emma Laden" to Shopping Mall

### Week 15: **Production & Consumption Culture**

December 4: Consumer Culture versus Green Awareness

December 6: Communication

December 8: Public and Private Transportation

Week 16:

December 13: **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. 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 (each unexcused absence will lower the final grade by 2%).** 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 unless used for taking notes. Students are encouraged to take thorough notes, participate in class discussion, and ask clarifying questions.

### **Class Participation & Homework (20%):**

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. The *Discussion Board* (see the link on the Canvas site) may be used for discussions outside class. Frequent contributions to the Discussion board will have a positive impact on the overall participation grade. From time to time, students will also be asked to respond to specific questions, using the Discussion Board for their answers.

### **Presentations (20%):**

Each student will give 2 oral presentations on German culture, including one-page handouts for your classmates. I have to approve of the presentation topic in advance. Presentations should not be longer than 5-10 minutes. The student should provide 1-2

thought-provoking questions for class discussion after the presentation.

**Position Papers (20%):**

Students will be expected to write 3 position papers (**2-3 pages/600-800 words, Times New Roman, size 12, double spaced, in German**) on German culture topics discussed in class. Criteria for the evaluation of these essays are linguistic proficiency, style, and content.

**Midterm - German Culture Project (20%):**

Students will produce a creative cultural project of their own choice (two or three-dimensional exhibits, e.g., carving, figure, poster board, photo collage, sculpture, painting, comic, poem, model, invention, etc.) and of a topic related to German culture. However, the project **may NOT address stereotypical cultural areas, such as German beer, cars, soccer, sausages, sauerkraut, lederhosen, etc.** A brief 200 word abstract in English and German will be submitted along with the project that explains the cultural context. The 5 best projects will be displayed at the Global Culture Exhibit at the USU library and enter in a competition with the top culture exhibits from the other language sections. The Dean will award \$300 for first prize, \$200 for second prize, and \$100 for third prize.

**Final Exam (20%):**

The final exam is a written test that consists of multiple choice and short answer questions. The questions relate directly to the readings and the topics we covered in class. It is **VERY** important that you take thorough notes during every class period as your notes will serve as your study guide for the final exam.

**Canvas**

In addition to the **Supplementary Readings**, the Canvas website will host links to online resources relevant to the course. There is a wealth of German culture sites of various sorts (and the list is constantly expanding), so please feel free to suggest any sites for inclusion on the Canvas site.

**Physical Impairments**

Students with ADA- documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center as early in the semester as possible. In class alternate format materials (braille, large print, digital or audio) are available with advance notice.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism includes knowingly “representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged used of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, and referral to psychological counseling.

**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.