




Term 2 2018-2019

Course Code & Title:	GERM1100	
	Germany Today	
Language of Instruction: English	Units: 3	

Course Description

Germany was a once divided nation with complex historical background and rich culture which continuously attracts international interest. This course investigates trends and developments in contemporary German culture and society from a cross-cultural perspective, taking into consideration the historical events of different generations in Germany. Students will be encouraged to compare and critically analyze the reflections about Germany and their own society. The course content will be presented by up-to-date audiovisual materials. No knowledge of German is required.

Learning Outcomes

The aim of this course is to let students explore different aspects of German culture and society and make them think about the source of behavior, customs and attitudes, while comparing with Hong Kong and Chinese behavior. The famous German poet Goethe included in his concept of culture clothing and food, history and philosophy, art and science, children's games and sayings, climate and landscapes, economy and literature, political and private life. Although the course cannot cover all aspects, it will give students an idea about German mentality and ways of thinking and refer them back to their own background. One needs to be aware of one's own background to discover the identity of the other.

After taking this course, students are expected to have an understanding of Germany in regards to:

- (1) Geography (physical & political)
- (2) Holidays & Festivals (secular vs religious background)
- (3) Leisure life (daily after work & vacation)
- (4) Education (primary ~ post-secondary; academic & vocational)
- (5) History: modern history with focus on 20th century.

Course Content (subject to change)

Topics		Content
1	Perception of Germany	- cross-cultural differences - dos and don'ts in Germany vs HK / China
2	"Heimat"	- socio-cultural aspects of the term "Heimat" (home)
3	National Anthem	- history of the German National Anthem - particularities of the German Anthem compared to other countries' anthems
4	Geography	- geographical properties and landscapes of Germany, Austria and Switzerland - federal states and major cities and landmarks
5	Leisure Life	- after-work and holiday activities in Germany - travel habits of Germans
6	Festivals	- major religious and secular and festivals observed in Germany - spread of certain holiday customs to countries abroad
7	Education System	- part 1: from pre-school to secondary education - part 2: post-secondary education: vocational training & universities
8	History	- part 1: Medieval times to the German Empire under the emperor Wilhelm I (end of 19 th century) - part 2: 20 th century history: WWI & WWII; rebuilding Germany after WWII; split & re-unification of East and West Germany

9	Resistance to the NS-Regime	- rise of National Socialism in 1920~30ies Germany; - resistance to Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich (NS-Regime) from various parts of society (including academia & the military)
10	Women in German Society	- opportunities and status of women in German society - equal rights for all - famous German women in sports, entertainment and politics
11	German Cuisine	- regional dishes and drinks typical for various German federal states - advancement of nutrition for common people in history - typical festival dishes

Learning Activities

Interactive classwork (hr per week)		Extra-curricular activities (hr per week)		Web-based teaching (hr per week)		Homework / Self-study (hr per week)		reflection papers (hrs per week)	
in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class
3			0.5		1		1		1
M			O		M		M		M

M = Mandatory / O = Optional

Assessment Scheme

Task nature	Description	Weight
Participation	It is important that students actively follow the content presented, study the suggested reading sections (placed on Blackboard) and participate in class discussions.	15%
In-class presentations	Students organize a tutorial session and present a chosen topic in groups of two or three (2~3). A list of available topics is provided below, and students may also suggest their own topics.	25%
Reflection Papers	During the term, two (2) written assignments of 1,000 words each will have to be handed in. Students will reflect on topics discussed in class, compare the situation in Hong Kong and Germany and come to their own conclusions.	30%
Final Test	The final test will take place during the last session of the course. It will cover questions about the main topics of the reading assignments.	30%

Notes: You are required to arrive on time.

You are required to attend at least 75% of the class. Treat 75% attendance as the minimum, not the maximum.

The success of your own learning will highly depend on your attendance.

Should you miss more than 25% of the class, you will automatically fail the course.

If you are unable to attend, get informed about what content and homework you missed and make it up yourself.

Grade Descriptors

A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes and meeting all specified assessment requirements.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes and meeting almost all specified assessment requirements.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Meeting the assessment requirements in an appropriate manner.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. Meeting the assessment requirements in a satisfactory manner
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. The assessment requirements are not always met.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements. The assessment requirements are not met.

Learning Resources

Core Reading

- <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de>
- Bernstein, Eckhard: Culture and Customs of Germany. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004.
- Lewis, Derek: Contemporary Germany. A Handbook. London: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Fraser, Catherine C, Hoffmann, Dierk O. Pop Culture Germany! Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006
- Deutsche Welle (www.dw.com)
- Please refer to the Blackboard site for GERM1100 for further material.

Suggested Topics for student presentations

Technical developments in Germany (e.g., German Cars); green technology in Germany; German football; Fine Arts in Germany; German music (Classical / Modern / Pop / Techno, etc.); Martin Luther: 500th Reformation anniversary; German design and architecture; the fall of the Berlin Wall; the German political system; King Ludwig II of Bavaria and his famous castles; The Iron Chancellor: Otto von Bismarck; the social security net in Germany; German theatre; the German media; German philosophy; German cinema; Germany in the European Union, etc.

You may also choose other topics of your liking. All topics need to be approved by the course teacher.

Schedule (*Subject to change*):

Week	Date	Remarks	Content
1	Jan 11		1 Introduction 2 Perception of Germany in other countries
2	Jan 18	Online add drop (until Jan 20 (Sun))	3 Heimat, 4 National Anthem
3	Jan 25	Department add drop (until Fri 25) (only in exceptional cases!!)	5 Geography <i>Reading: Geography, Population, Language</i>
4	Feb 1		6 Leisure Life 7 Student Presentation <i>Reading: Holidays, Customs, Leisure</i>
5	Feb 4-9	Feb 4 (Mon)- Feb 9 (Sat) Lunar New Year Vacation	
6	Feb 15		8 Festivals 9 Student Presentation
7	Feb 22		10 Education System 11 Student Presentation <i>Reading: Structures of Education</i>
8	Mar 1		12 History (part 1) 13 Student Presentation <i>Reading: Modern German History</i>
9	Mar 8		14 History (part 2) 15 Student Presentation
10	Mar 15		16 Resistance to the NS-Regime 17 Student Presentation <i>Reading: How far could German Resistance have changed the course of History?</i>
11	Mar 22		18 Women in German Society 19 Student Presentation <i>Reading: Women, Marriage and Education</i>

12	Mar 29		20 German Cuisine 21 Student Presentation <i>Reading: Food, Wine, Beer and Fashion</i>
13	Apr 1-7	Apr 1 (Mon) – Apr 6 (Sat) Reading Week	
14	Apr 12		Final test (will cover selected chapters from the “Reading”)

Class section and Teacher’s contact details:

Class	Time	Classroom	Weeks	Teacher	Email
GERM1100	Fri 8:30-11:15	YIA_501	12	Dr. Irene B. Littig	irenelittig2001@yahoo.com

For further information and inquiries you are welcome to contact the course level coordinator:

Contact	Telephone	Email	Office
Bernd Esch	3943 1546	berndesch@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G24, Leung Kau Kui Building
General Office	3943 9836	lin@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G17, KKL Building Office Hours: Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:30pm Friday: 8:45am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:45pm

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students’ uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

Feedback for Evaluation

Our language programme highly values students’ feedback and comments and is happy to use them for reflection on our teaching and improvement. Students are very welcome to provide comments and feedback on the course any time to their course teacher or the course level coordinator through email or in personal conversation. In addition, students’ feedbacks will be collected in the middle of the term through an open-end questionnaire and the teacher will discuss the feedbacks in class and make improvements if necessary. The course will also follow the university’s course evaluation exercise at the end of the term, and students’ feedbacks will be used for future course planning and teaching.