




Term 1 2022-2023

<b>Course Code &amp; Title:</b>	<b>GERM1100</b>	
	<b>Germany Today</b>	
<b>Language of Instruction:</b> English	<b>Units:</b> 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) The perception of Germany & Germans (at home & abroad)
- (2) Geography (physical & political)
- (3) Holidays & Festivals (secular vs religious background)
- (4) Leisure life (daily after work & vacation)
- (5) Education (primary ~ post secondary; academic & vocational)
- (6) History (modern history with focus on 20<sup>th</sup> century)
- (7) Women's status in society

**Course Content (subject to change)**

Topics		Content
1	Perception of Germany	- Stereotypes - cross-cultural differences - dos and don'ts in Germany vs HK / China
2	Geography	- geographical properties and landscapes of Germany, Austria and Switzerland - federal states and major cities and landmarks
3	Holidays, Customs & Festivals	- major religious and secular and festivals observed in Germany - spread of certain holiday customs to countries abroad
4	Leisure Life	- after-work and holiday activities in Germany - travel habits of Germans
5	Education System	- part 1: from pre-school to secondary education - part 2: post-secondary education: vocational training & universities

6	History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- part 1: Medieval times to the German Empire under the emperor Wilhelm I (end of 19<sup>th</sup> century); 20<sup>th</sup> century history: WWI &amp; WWII</li> <li>- part 2: rebuilding Germany after WWII; split &amp; re-unification of East and West Germany</li> </ul> German National Anthem: history & particularities compared to other countries' anthems
7	Women in German Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- opportunities and status of women in German society</li> <li>- equal rights for all</li> <li>- famous German women in sports, entertainment and politics</li> </ul>

Learning Activities							
Interactive classwork		Presentation		Reflection papers		Self-study	
(hr per week) in / out class		(hr per week) in / out class		(hr per week) in / out class		(hr per week) in / out class	
3			1		1		1
M			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 Moodle) and participate in class discussions.	10%
In-class presentations	Students organize a tutorial session and present a chosen topic individually or in groups of two or three students. A list of available topics is provided below, and students may also suggest their own topics. A draft of the presentation must be submitted 1 week in advance.	30%
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.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
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.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.

D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

### 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
- Please refer to the Moodle site for GERM1100 for further material.

### Suggested Topics for student presentations

Technical developments in Germany (e.g., German Cars<sup>1</sup>); Energiewende Deutschland (energy transition in Germany); German football (national & regional leagues); Fine Arts in Germany (e.g. expressionism; contemporary media artists, the Biennale in Berlin, etc.) ; Music in German speaking countries (Germany & Austria): Classical / Modern / Pop / Techno, etc.; Religion in Germany: 500 years of Martin Luther's Reformation anniversary 2017; German design and architecture (e.g., 100 years Bauhaus 1919~2019) ; the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989; Tourism in Germany (e.g., German Fairy Tale Route; Castles on the River Rhine; etc.); History (e.g., King Ludwig II of Bavaria and his famous castles; the Iron Chancellor: Otto von Bismarck, etc); the social security net in Germany; German theatre; German media; German philosophy; German cinema (e.g. German silent movies; movies during Nazi time; Neuer Deutscher Film; film schools in Germany, etc); Germany in the European Union; Museums in Germany (e.g. Berlin, Munich, etc); Flüchtlingskrise 2015 (refugee crisis); Abgasskandal (Dieselaffäre – Diesel emissions scandal), and many more.

**You may also present other topics of your own choice about Germany, Austria or Switzerland.** All topics need to be approved by the course teacher.

### Schedule (*Subject to change*):

Week	Date	Remarks	Content
1	6 Sep		1 Perception of Germany (pt 1): Common Stereotypes
2	13 Sep	E-add/drop on CUSIS; ~ 19 Sep (Mon)	1 Perception of Germany (pt 2): "Culture Shock"
3	20 Sep	Department add/drop (20~23 & 26 Sep) (only in exceptional cases!)	2 Geography of German speaking countries <i>Reading: Geography, Population, Language</i>
4	27 Sep		3 Holidays, Customs & Festivals (pt 1) <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Holidays, Customs, Leisure</i>
5	4 Oct	Public Holiday: Chung Yeung	No class
6	11 Oct		3 Holidays, Customs & Festivals (pt 2) <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Holidays, Customs, Leisure</i>
7	18 Oct		4 Leisure Life: spare time & vacation time <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Holidays, Customs, Leisure</i>
8	25 Oct		5 Education System (pt 1): Primary & Secondary <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Structures of Education</i>
9	1 Nov		5 Education System (pt 2): Post-Secondary; Universities; Vocational Education <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Structures of Education</i>

10	8 Nov		6 History (pt 1): Early History ~ WWII <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Modern German History</i>
11	15 Nov		6 History (part 2): Post- WWII: Two German States & Reunification; National Anthem <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Modern German History</i>
12	22 Nov		7 Women in German Society <u>Student Presentation</u> <i>Reading: Women, Marriage and Education</i>
13	29 Nov		<b>Final test (will cover selected chapters from the "Reading")</b>

***Class section and Teacher's contact details:***

Class	Time	Classroom	Weeks	Teacher	Email
GERM1100	Tue 9:30-12:15	ELB_403	13	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 <b>Office Hours: Monday to Thursday:</b> 8:45am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:30pm <b>Friday:</b> 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.

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.deutsches-museum.de/en/verkehrszentrum/information/visitor-information/>