

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**  
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

**2017-2018 GERM 340 B1:  
Introduction to the Study of Modern German Literature**

(Winter Term)

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Time: M W F 10:00-10:50am  
Place: ESB 1.31  
Office Hours: M W F 11:00am-12:00pm  
by appointment  
Course Website:  
on eClass

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**Course Prerequisite:** co-requisite GERM 303

**Course-based Ethics Approval** in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes       No, not needed, no such projects approved.

**Community Service Learning** component

Required     Optional     None

**Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available**

- Exam registry – Students' Union  
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

**Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)**

Yes       No

**Course Description and Objectives:**

The course highlights German cultural and literary developments from the Classical Weimar period to the present. We shall discuss texts dealing with social conditions, class and race, gender roles and identities, high and low cultures, rulers, artists and ordinary people. Text by canonical authors such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Adalbert Stifter, Thomas Mann, Else Lasker-Schüler, Franz Kafka, Bertolt Brecht, as well as by contemporary writers such as Wolfgang Herrndorf, Judith Herrmann or Juli Zeh will be discussed with regard to formal characteristics. We will give special

attention to the social and historical background, as well as to literary trends and theories we can apply to make the text relatable to our world today. We will also use films and videos to enhance our understanding of selected texts and provide a visual image of the cultural background of the individual period.

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to name the most important periods of German literature since 1750 and identify their individual traits. They will be able to apply this knowledge to the analysis of a chosen text and engage critically with the special formal features of the text on the basis of theoretical background information. Eventually they will be able to evaluate the literary features of a text and develop their own (creative) response to the contemporary literary sphere.

**Texts:**

Recommended:

**Waltraud Maierhofer, Astrid Klocke: *Deutsche Literatur im Kontext 1750-2000: A German Literature Reader*. Newburyport: Focus 2008. (978-1585102631)**

A selection from:

Johann Wolfgang Goethe: *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (1774)

Heinrich Heine: *Das Buch der Lieder* (1827)

Frank Wedekind: *Die Büchse der Pandora* (1894)

Rainer Maria Rilke: *Duineser Elegien* (1923)

Else Lasker-Schüler: *Mein Blaues Klavier* (1937)

Ingeborg Bachmann: *Anrufung des großen Bären* (1956)

Judith Herrmann: *Sommerhaus, später* (1998)

Thomas Meinecke: *Lookalikes* (2012)

Carolin Emcke, *Gegen den Hass* (2016)

(text excerpts will be provided through eClass)

**Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):**

Attendance, participation & preparation (throughout the semester)	10%
Roundtable debate & text intro	20%
2 essays (essay #1 due Feb 28, essay #2 due April 11; one 15%, one 30%)	45%
Test (Feb 16)	15%
Creative project	10%

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

***Attendance, Participation, Preparation, and Homework***

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in a foreign-language course. Students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of class work and assignments. That means coming to class prepared, viewing the assigned films and reading all texts carefully in advance, doing written or oral homework diligently, participating in group work, and contributing meaningfully to class discussions.

### ***Roundtable Statement / Debate and Text Introduction***

Each student is expected to give an introduction to one specific text or object during the term. In addition, students will participate in a roundtable discussion on a specific topic. Participants in roundtables present on a question, by preparing a 5-7-minute statement and by preparing a set of discussion questions to actively engage in the debate following the short presentations. The statement should give an introduction to and overview including important facts and dates. In case the statement is based on a text, instead of a summary of the plot, it should focus on the central idea and a specific aspect, introduce an assumption or opinion, and finally articulate at least three related questions that will be discussed during the debate. The individual presentations follow the same model, and focus on one main theme or topic, supporting the argument with background research and stylistic features found within the text. Outlines and bibliographies for the presentations are due a week in advance.

### ***Essays***

Two essays are due during the term. The essays should reflect and elaborate on the objectives and materials learned and used in class. The first essay (800 words for Majors or Minors writing in German, 1,200 words for those students writing in English) should describe a specific research interest, on the basis of a piece of theory or secondary literature, formulate a research question, and develop strategies to pursue this question. The research question, a bibliography, and an outline of the argument are due two weeks before the essay. The second essay (1,000-1,200 words in German, 1,800 in English) should follow up on the first and should display a structured argument with a compelling thesis and insightful conclusion. Again, the research question, a bibliography, and an outline of the argument are due two weeks before the essay. You are expected to use academic secondary sources, articles and books. Further guidelines on essays writing will be published on eClass. Essays will be marked: 10% language (where applicable), 50% content, 20% research question, 20% form.

### ***Test***

There will be one test in the middle of the term. The test will consist of questions relating to the theories, central concepts, texts, and films studied in class, as well as to the group work and discussions. The test will be 50 minutes long.

### ***Creative Project***

During the weekly time for group work, students will develop a creative response to any of the texts discussed in class. For your choice of the text and the medium of your response please consult the instructor.

### **Required Notes:**

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

### ***Academic Integrity:***

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding

academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

***Learning and Working Environment:***

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

***Academic Honesty:***

**All students** should consult the information provided by the the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

**Students involved in language courses and translation courses** should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

***Recording of Lectures:***

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

***Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:***

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

**In this course, 10% of the grade is assigned to attendance, preparation and participation, i.e. students must view all assigned films and read and prepare texts for the assigned class period so that they can participate successfully in the group work and class discussions.**

***Policy for Late Assignments:***

Students who consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension just one time throughout the course with no penalty. However, if a second excuse will be granted for late assignments, half of the mark assigned for this particular work will be deducted. Otherwise, all assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Any assignment not handed-in in time or unexcused late assignments will not be given any marks. Late excuses will not be accepted for any reason.

***Student Accessibility Services:***

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); Email; phone 780-492-3381).

***Grading:***

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

**“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”**

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
<p><b>Excellent.</b> A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.</p>	<b>A+</b>	4.0	<b>97-100</b>
	<b>A</b>	4.0	<b>93-96</b>
	<b>A-</b>	3.7	<b>90-92</b>
<p><b>Good.</b> B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.</p>	<b>B+</b>	3.3	<b>87-89</b>
	<b>B</b>	3.0	<b>83-86</b>
	<b>B-</b>	2.7	<b>80-82</b>
<p><b>Satisfactory.</b> C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.</p>	<b>C+</b>	2.3	<b>77-79</b>
	<b>C</b>	2.0	<b>73-76</b>
	<b>C-</b>	1.7	<b>70-72</b>
<p><b>Poor/Minimal Pass.</b> D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.</p>	<b>D+</b>	1.3	<b>65-69</b>
	<b>D</b>	1.0	<b>60-64</b>
<p><b>Failure.</b></p>	<b>F</b>	0.0	<b>0-59</b>