

Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2014

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area German
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Germanic Languages & Lit - D0547
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 3256
Course Title Coming to Terms with the Holocaust and War in Germany: Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung
Transcript Abbreviation HolocaustandWar
Course Description This course is dedicated to examining how postwar Germans came to terms with war and the Holocaust by looking at various responses in several genres, from philosophy and public debates to poems and films. Students will be confronted with difficult historical, aesthetic, and ethical issues in the various German responses to the Holocaust. Taught in English.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 16.0501
Subsidy Level General Studies Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Quarters to Semesters

Quarters to Semesters

New course

Give a rationale statement explaining the purpose of the new course

There is perhaps no more important topic in this course than how ideas – in this case extreme ideas about nation, state, race, and morality – came to affect (and distort) human norms and behavior.

Sought concurrence from the following Fiscal Units or College

Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:

Culture and Ideas

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- My definition of student success includes an understanding of the various ways in which postwar German culture came to terms with its past and an ability to reflect on common assumptions we harbor about our own norms and values in a civilized world.
- One of the main objectives is to see how the past influences the present, and how coming to terms with the past of National Socialism, the war, and the Holocaust is just an extreme example of appropriation of past periods for present purposes.

Content Topic List

- Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung ("Mastering the Past")
- The War
- The Holocaust, and the Aftermath in Germany
- Germans and Nazis
- Documenting the Past
- Women and the Third Reich
- Filmic response to the Holocaust; Guilt and Blame
- Perpetrators and Victims

Attachments

- G_3256_GE_rationale.pdf: GE Rationale/Assess

(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Miller, Natascha)

- G_3256_Syllabus_Holub.pdf: Syllabus rev.

(Syllabus. Owner: Miller, Natascha)

Comments

- Syllabus has been revised and the GE Historical Study category has been deleted. *(by Miller, Natascha on 05/01/2013 01:17 PM)*
- See 4-29-13 e-mail to N Miller. *(by Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal on 04/29/2013 02:17 PM)*

COURSE REQUEST
3256 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Heysel,Garett Robert
05/06/2013

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Miller,Natascha	04/17/2013 11:11 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Fischer,Bernhard	04/17/2013 11:25 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	04/22/2013 02:39 PM	College Approval
Revision Requested	Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	04/29/2013 02:18 PM	ASCCAO Approval
Submitted	Miller,Natascha	05/01/2013 01:22 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Fischer,Bernhard	05/01/2013 01:25 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heysel,Garett Robert	05/06/2013 08:52 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Hogle,Danielle Nicole Hanlin,Deborah Kay	05/06/2013 08:52 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Syllabus Template for German 3256: Coming to Terms with the Holocaust and War in Germany:
Vergangenheitsbewältigung

(1) Instructor: Professor Robert C. Holub

Office: 340 Hagerty Hall

Phone: (614) 292-0821

Email: Holub.5@osu.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

(2) NA

(3) TBD

(4) German 3256: Coming to Terms with the Holocaust and War in Germany:
Vergangenheitsbewältigung

(5) Fulfills GE Culture and Ideas

Goals:

1. Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.
2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

(6) Course Description: For at least the five decades postwar German intellectual and cultural life was haunted by the shadows of the Nazi Past. In particular the horrors of the war and the enormity of the cruel and murderous actions in the Holocaust have caused German intellectuals, writers, filmmakers, statesmen, and poets to reflect upon the nature of German actions and their consequences. This course is dedicated to examining how postwar Germans came to terms with war and the Holocaust. The ubiquity of the response in Germany has been such that the Germans use a single term for this phenomenon: *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, which means literally “mastering the past,” but which is understood to deal specifically with confronting the crimes of the Third Reich. We will look at various responses in several different genres, from philosophy and public debates to poems and films. We will discern that there are several periods to “*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*,” and that the nature of Germans dealing with their past (and the past of their fathers/mothers and grandfathers/grandmothers) has changed over time. Students will be confronted with difficult historical, intellectual, aesthetic, and ethical issues in this variety of German response.

(7) Required Course Materials:

Heinrich Böll: *The Train Was On Time*

Günter Grass: *Cat and Mouse*

Rolf Hochhuth: *The Representative*

Peter Weiss: *The Investigation*

Christa Wolf: *Patterns of Childhood*

Bernhard Schlink: The Reader

All other readings will be supplied to the class via Carmen. Films will be made available as well.

(8) Assignments: Average number of pages of reading per week will be fewer than 50 pages. In weeks when the chief assignment is viewing a film, there will be little or no reading required.

1. A midterm examination after the eighth week of classes. With instructor's permission students may substitute a short paper (4-6 pages) for the midterm examination.

2. A final examination. With instructor's permission, students will be permitted to substitute a final paper (10-15 pages) for the final examination.

3. Class participation and attendance.

4. One in-class Presentation.

5. Homework.

(9) Grading based on the following percentages: midterm/paper (25%); final examination/paper (40%); presentation (10%); participation (15%); homework (10%).

(10) Grading Scale:

100-93 A	79-77 C+	
92-90 A-	76-73 C	
89-87 B+	72-70 C-	
86-83 B	69-67 D+	
82-80 B-	66-63 D	below 63 E

(11) Final examination during the regularly scheduled finals period.

(12) Class attendance policy: Students are expected to attend class and the grade will be impacted for failure to attend more than three sessions per term.

(13) Weekly Outline

Week	Topics	Reading or Viewing Assignment
Week One	Introduction to "Mastering the Past"; the War, the Holocaust, and the Aftermath in Germany; official responses in anthems; poetry after Auschwitz	Germany's national anthems; Celan's "Fugue of Death"

Week Two	Philosophical Reflections from Three Different Sources: the internal emigration and the new Germany; the collaborator and the philosophical distancing; the exiled and their view of the Holocaust	Karl Jaspers: <i>The Question of German Guilt</i> ; Martin Heidegger: “The Self-Assertion of the German University” and “The Rectorate 1933/34: Facts and Thoughts”; Theodor Adorno/Max Horkheimer, “Elements of Anti-Semitism”
Week Three	The View from the Frontline Soldier: Germans and Nazis; Soldiers and Civilians	Heinrich Böll: <i>The Train Was On Time</i>
Week Four	First Filmic Response: Chasing daemons and catching criminals	Wolfgang Staude: <i>The Murderers Are Among Us</i>
Week Five	Writing and Guilt: responsibility and the difficulty of facing the past	Günter Grass: <i>Cat and Mouse</i>
Week Six	Complicity of the Pope: good and evil with regard to the Holocaust	Rolf Hochhuth: <i>The Representative</i>
Week Seven	Documenting the Past: individuals and systemic responsibilities	Peter Weiss: <i>The Investigation</i>
Week Eight	Psychoanalysis as Tool for Understanding the Third Reich: who were the Nazis?, why can't we master our past; male culture and the horrors of war	Selections from Wilhelm Reich, <i>Mass Psychology of Facism</i> ; Alexander Mitscherlich, <i>The Inability to Mourn</i> , and Klaus Theweleit, <i>Male Fantasies</i>
Week Nine	Splitting the Self: Accounting for one's own actions through otherness; Mothers and Daughters and the other victims of National Socialism	Christa Wolf: <i>Patterns of Childhood</i> (first half of book); Helga Sanders-Brahms: <i>Germany, Pale Mother</i>
Week Ten	Women and the Third Reich: Coming to terms with yourself as coming to terms with the past	Christa Wolf: <i>Patterns of Childhood</i> (second half of book)
Week Eleven	Explanations of Nazism: the Hitler in us; kitsch and National Socialism	Hans-Jürgen Syberberg: <i>Our Hitler</i> (first two hours); Saul Friedländer, <i>Reflections on Nazism</i>
Week Twelve	Destruction of a Nation Consensus: revision of admission of guilt; Hitler and Stalin; Habermas and the ethical imperative	Selections from <i>Forever in the Shadow of Hitler</i> (Historians' Debate)

Week Thirteen	The Long View of National Socialism: German tradition and the hypothesis of German exceptionalism; Germany suffers in silence	From Daniel Goldhagen: <i>Hitler's Willing Executioners</i>; W. G. Sebald, "On the Natural History of Destruction"
Week Fourteen	Blaming the Innocent: Perpetrators as Victims in the Third Reich	Bernhard Schlink, <i>The Reader</i>

(14) "It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](#)

(15) "Students with disabilities that have been certified by the [Office for Disability Services](#) will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901."

GE rationale and assessment for German 3256: Culture and Ideas

3. A GE rationale that answers specifically the following questions

a) How do the course objectives address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The learning outcomes state that students are to “analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.” We will be dealing with major figures in twentieth-century Germany from the sphere of philosophy, literature, and film. All of them will be focused on a major ethical problem involving the German past. Students will be analyzing and interpreting their works in lecture/discussion, as well as in written assignments. The second learning outcome is that students “evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which [sic] guide human behavior.” There is perhaps no more important topic in this course than how ideas – in this case extreme ideas about nation, state, race, and morality – came to affect (and distort) human norms and behavior. In presenting material that deals with an extreme case, I believe students are forced to come to terms with their own norms and behaviors in a new way. Let me give you an example: I have taught this course at Berkeley many times. Frequently students will be appalled at the inaction of Germans in opposing measures of inhumanity, especially against the Jews. They claim they would have acted differently. We often discuss what it means to claim you would behave in a more noble and ethical fashion in a safe classroom in the US of the present versus actually doing so in Nazi Germany, where the consequence might have been arrest, torture, and death, not only for you, but also for members of your family. I think students learn a great deal about themselves from this course, and come to recognize that their ideas and ideals are just “talk” until they are tested in difficult situations.**

b) How do the readings assigned address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **Reading assignments (and viewing assignments) are from major figures. They are dealing with these difficult moral and historical issues.**

c) How do the topics address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The topics are related directly to the reading and viewing assignments, which in turn relate directly to the lectures and discussions. They therefore also help students to analyze and interpret major forms of thought, and to examine how ideas relate to norms and behavior.**

d) How do the written assignments address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The written assignments will ask students specifically to analyze and interpret the writers and filmmakers that are on the syllabus. The written assignments will deal directly with their ideas and their reflections on norms, values, and behaviors in the past and in the present.**

e) How does the course aim to sharpen students’ response, judgment, and

evaluation skills? **The course aims to sharpen students response, judgment and evaluation by presenting them with prominent writers, philosophers, and filmmakers who are reflecting on difficult situations. Students will be asked to insert themselves into these situations and develop their own responses.**

4. A GE assessment plan

a) Description of the specific methods etc. **I will be using both direct and indirect methods of assessment. I plan to survey students periodically in the course to see what is working for them and what is not working. The written assignments will be focused on the learning outcomes, and I should be able to assess how successful I have been from an examination of the results of the first essay. I occasionally like to give the students a quick written question, ask them to write on it for five minutes, have them pass it in, and use it as the basis for discussion. For example, I might ask students whether Jaspers' categorization of guilt and responsibility is still valid for today, whether it excludes too many from the category of guilt, and whether it tends to exonerate rather than assign responsibility. This sort of method allows me to see how well students are doing with the material assigned. I would like to remain flexible and be able to change my delivery of the material according to what works best for the students in achieving the desired learning outcomes.**

b) Explanation of the level of student achievement expected. **My definition of success for students will include (1) an understanding of the various ways in which postwar German culture came to terms with its past and (2) an ability to reflect on common assumptions we harbor about our own norms and values in a civilized world. I believe most students will be able to achieve this sort of understanding, and I will have to rethink my methods if more than a handful do not accomplish this much in their written work and contributions to discussions.**

c) Description of follow-up/feedback process. **GLL collects final evaluations, and I will certainly consult them to see what the student response has been and to alter methods for more successful attainment of the goals of the course. But I do believe that having indicators during the course, as I have stated above, is essential, and will implement changes according to the feedback I have.**

GE rationale and assessment for German 3256: Historical Study

3. A GE rationale that answers specifically the following questions:

a) How do the course objectives address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The first learning outcome for historical study is that students “construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.” Students in this course will be dealing with a period of great historical interest: the Third Reich through reflections on the Third Reich in the postwar period. Students will therefore be exposed to views of the Third Reich from various perspectives. But they will also see the postwar period and its developments. So, for example, the earliest works from the late 1940s and early 1950s show Germany in its state of shell shock and initial recovery from the war, while the works of the 1960s reflect a good deal of the social and political turmoil of that era. In this regard students will be able to see how the past influenced the origin and nature of issues throughout the postwar period, continuing into the present. The assignments will put students in the position of analyzing and writing about critically about source material, much of it primary material from the postwar era, but also some primary material from the Third Reich (Heidegger’s rector speech, for example). There will also be secondary material included, for example the psychoanalytic interpretation and explanation for historical phenomena in the Nazi period. There will be a great diversity of material included in the course.**

b) How do the course objectives address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The objectives are directly related to the material assigned for the course and all involve an understanding of the past and of an especially important past era in Germany history. One of the main objectives of the course is to see how the past influences the present, and how coming to terms with the horrific past of National Socialism, the war, and the Holocaust is just an extreme example of appropriation of past periods for present purposes.**

c) How do the topics address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The topics are also directly related to the assigned materials and contribute directly to an understanding of the Third Reich and how the Third Reich is essential for understanding aspects of postwar Germany.**

d) How do the written assignments address the GE category expected learning outcomes? **The written assignments are directly related to the course materials. Students will be asked to reflect on the Third Reich as it has been mediated through postwar documents.**

e) How will students sharpen communication skills through the preparation of essay exams and papers and through participation in discussions in this course? **They will sharpen these skills through exposure to different ideas and**

perspectives, through articulation of their own ideas and perspectives, and through active interchange in discussions that will challenge ideas and perspectives they currently hold. The papers will be designed to have students argue a perspective, knowing that there are other valid perspectives on these issues.

4. A GE assessment plan etc.

a) Description of the specific methods etc. **I will be using both direct and indirect methods of assessment. I plan to survey students periodically in the course to see what is working for them and what is not working. The written assignments will be focused on the learning outcomes, and I should be able to assess how successful I have been from an examination of the results of the first essay. I occasionally like to give the students a quick written question, ask them to write on it for five minutes, have them pass it in, and use it as the basis for discussion. For example, I have had success in the past asking students to write their reactions to the fact that in Weiss's documentary drama, drawn verbatim from testimony at the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt, one witness has lines that are not included in the transcripts. So, the question is what does historical documentation mean? Do we get the "truth" from historical documentation, or is it necessary to add something to arrive at a workable perspective on the past? This sort of method allows me to see how well students are doing with the material assigned. I would like to remain flexible and be able to change my delivery of the material according to what works best for the students in achieving the desired learning outcomes.**

b) Explanation of the level of student achievement expected. **My definition of success for students will include (1) an understanding of the various ways postwar individuals have sought to come to terms with various dimensions of the Third Reich and (2) an understanding for how history depends on perspective and changes with historical change in one's own ear. I believe most students will be able to achieve this sort of understanding, and I will have to rethink my methods if more than a handful do not accomplish this much in their written work and contributions to discussions.**

c) Description of follow-up/feedback process. **GLL collects final evaluations, and I will certainly consult them to see what the student response has been and to alter methods for more successful attainment of the goals of the course. But I do believe that having indicators during the course, as I have stated above, is essential, and will implement changes according to the feedback I have.**