Logistical Information

**Class:** Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11:30 to 12:20 in Coleman Morse Center 201.

**Office:** 349 Decio Hall

**Office Hours:** Mondays from 2:00 to 3:30 and Wednesdays from 3:00 to 4:30 as well as by appointment. Impromptu meetings can easily be arranged before class on Mondays and Wednesdays and before and after class on Fridays.

**Phone:** (574) 631-8142 (office); (574) 302-1813 (cell).

**E-mail:** mroche@nd.edu; **Web:** http://mroche.nd.edu/

Course Description

Germany is a fascinating country, the largest in the European Union and culturally, economically, intellectually, and politically a world leader. This course will help students explore distinctive aspects of contemporary Germany and, to a lesser extent, the German-speaking world, specifically in their difference from the United States. Along with this thematic focus on Germany after 1945 and especially after 1989, students will work to expand their vocabulary and strengthen and refine their skills in speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Students will work toward greater fluency, accuracy, and complexity of expression.

The course will introduce diverse units on contemporary Germany, including recent history; the political system, including the constitution and political parties; society, including strengths, challenges, and multicultural aspects; culture, including selected works of literature and film; the media landscape; recent tendencies in German thought; German responses to the ecological question; and the educational system, including the German university. We will also discuss customs and everyday life. We will consider unusual and fascinating dimensions of the language, including proverbs and fascinating words as well as cognates and comparisons with another Germanic language, English. In addition, we will explore selected states and regional differences; quality-of-life indices (an area where German-speaking cities score remarkably well); religion in the German-speaking world, including its diversity; and stereotypes of the Germans and of the various German-speaking areas. We will also consider a variety of German jokes, especially political jokes.

In exploring these topics, students will engage a range of questions, such as: What have been the major developments in Germany since the end of World War II and especially since 1989? How does Germany organize itself politically? What are Germany’s distinctive strengths and challenges? How is education structured? Who are the major figures in German culture? What
themes permeate the tradition? How are they like or unlike what one sees in other cultures? Are there distinctive and defining characteristics of contemporary Germany, especially ones that provide a useful contrast with the United States?

**Calendar of Classes and Readings**

Each class of students is different, and if it turns out that we need to devote more time to grammar puzzles, we can do so, but we may then adjust one or two readings or move a small percentage of the analyses of works from discussion to lecture, though the preference and most likely scenario is to make student-centered discussions our dominant mode of learning. We will pursue grammar to some extent almost every day, spending more time as needed. We need to remain flexible with our schedule for two other reasons: in a course on contemporary Germany, significant current events may demand modest or significant shifts, and, depending on your capacities, we may need to lengthen or shorten the proposed homework assignments. If you are spending considerably more or considerably less than six hours on homework per week (two hours per class), please let me know. Please note that virtually every session has on Sakai accompanying study questions designed to help you focus your preparation.

January 17   Introduction

January 19   Current Politics

View Die Neujahrsansprache von Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel and Die Weihnachtsansprache vom Bundespräsident Frank-Walter Steinmeier (print copies are also on Sakai);
Read Mai 183-99;
Fill out the Fragebogen under Exercises and print it for class or e-mail it to me (this can be done anytime during the first two weeks).

January 22   Because of the University celebration of Martin Luther King Day, there will be no class today.

Read Citizenship in a Global Age – Personal Reflections on a Political Conundrum, by former Bundespräsident Horst Köhler, Notre Dame, September 6, 2017 (if you are curious or wish to linger, you may also watch it [here](#)); listen to the langsam gesprochene Nachrichten for January 20, 21, 22, or 23; and spend some time perusing the Sakai site.

January 24   Stunde Null

Watch Video 1: Stunde Null: Sieger, Opfer, Schuldige (on Sakai);
Read Mai 147-59;
Review “Witze, Drittes Reich.”

January 26   Postwar Poetry

January 29  Postwar Film I

Read handout and watch Rainer Werner Fassbinder, *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (entire film on Sakai).

January 31  Postwar Film II

Rewatch *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (selected scenes).

Tandem Submission

February 2  Documentary Drama: Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials

Read “Gesang von der Rampe” and “Gesang vom Unterscharführer Stark” from Peter Weiss’s *Die Ermittlung*.

February 5  Student Explorations I (Culture)

February 7  Der kalte Krieg

Watch Video 2: Ost-West: Der kalte Krieg (on Sakai);
Read Mai 159-75.

February 9  Biermann and German Jokes I

Read Deutschland 21; “Proteste in der Republik”; Biermann, “Ach Freund, geht es nicht auch dir so?” and “Ermutigung.” Begin reading hand-out on “Witze, DDR.”

February 12  German Jokes II

Complete Handout on “Witze, DDR.”

February 14  Peer Writing

February 16  Film on GDR I

Read handout and watch Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, *Das Leben der Anderen* (entire film on Sakai).

**Your first paper is due on February 17 at 8:00 A.M.**

February 19  Film on GDR II

Rewatch *Das Leben der Anderen* (selected scenes).

Tandem Submission
February 21  Wall/Wende

Watch Video 3: Die Nachkriegszeit - Wiedervereinigung (on Sakai);
Read Duden 105-08; Mai 175-183; and “Witze, Kanzler.”

Student Questions

February 23  Grundgesetz I

Begin Handout.

February 26  Visit to the Library with Julie Tanaka (Meet in Rare Books and Special Collections on the first floor, 102 Hesburgh Library)

Review the Library’s Course Guide for Contemporary Germany.

February 28  Guest from Germany (Charlotte Lange)

Prepare 3-5 Questions.

March 2  Grundgesetz II

Continue with Handout.

March 5  Politik I

Read Deutschland 26-28;
Review Parteien in Deutschland and work through the Wahl-o-Mat exercise for the Bundestagswahl 2017.

March 7  Politik II

Prepare information on your political party.

March 9  Student Explorations II (Geography)

Also read Deutschland: Land und Leute 12-13.

March 12  Break

March 14  Break

March 16  Break

March 19  Stereotype

Read Deutschland: Land und Leute 32-33 and Handout on Stereotype (with
March 21  Die deutsche Gesellschaft
Read Tatsachen 10-11, 114-116, and 118-21.

Student Questions

March 23  Student Explorations III (Culture)

March 26  Peer Writing

March 28  Religion
Read Landeskunde 13-14; Duden 179-81; Tatsachen 132-33; Benedikt, “Rede an den Bundestag”;
Watch Brief Video on the Pope and his Visit to Germany and “500 Jahre Reformation: Christen gesucht.”

Your second paper is due on March 30 at 8:00 A.M.

March 30  Karfreitag

April 2  Ostermontag

April 4  Contemporary Poetry
Read Ludwig Steinherr, Ausgewählte Gedichte (on Sakai).

April 6  Turkish-German Film I
Watch Fatih Akin, Auf der anderen Seite (entire film on Sakai).

April 9  Turkish-German Film II
Rewatch Auf der anderen Seite (selected scenes).

Tandem Submission

April 11  Minority Literature
Read Zafer Şenocak, “Die Sprache öffnen” and Yoko Tawada, “Von der Muttersprache zur Sprachmutter.”

April 13  Interessante Wörter und Tatsachen
Independent explorations via Statistisches Bundesamt; OECD360: Deutschland
2015 (also on Sakai); “Jugendbuch 2015 Deutsch” (on Sakai); and Deutschland in Grafiken (on reserve).

Tandem Submission Optional

April 16  Universities I

Read Landeskunde 98-07;
Listen to Zu viel Lernen – zu wenig Engagement?;
Watch Lieber Ausbildung als Studium;
Review “Sprechen wie ein Student” through Regelstudienzeit (Sakai).

April 18  Universities II

Read Was amerikanische Unis von deutschen lernen können (print version on Sakai);
Read Deutsche und amerikanische Unis: Wenn Studenten sich beschweren (print version on Sakai);
Read Studium in Deutschland hoch im Kurs; and
Review “Sprechen wie ein Student” from Rektor to ZVS (Sakai).

April 20  German Sayings and Idioms

Read Handout.

April 23  Student Explorations IV (TBD)

April 25  Media

Read Landeskunde 94-97;
Independent explorations on print and video media outlets.

April 27  Green Germany


April 30  Peer Writing

May 2  Everyday Life

Read Duden 356-56 and “Briefe aus Deutschland.”
Review “Witze, Alltägliches”;
Explore “Ankommen-App.”

Student Questions; Tandem Submission Optional
Your final paper is due on May 3 at 8:00 A.M.

Learning Goals

1) German Cultural Literacy: Students will be able to explain some of the main historical, social, political, and cultural developments in Germany since 1945 and describe the salient features of the German political system and of German culture and society in comparison with the United States.

2) German Language Skills: Students will advance in their ability to read, write, speak, and understand German. Through practice they will reinforce basic competencies as well as improve their capacity for mastery of the language, both spoken and written, and they will enhance their basic communication skills insofar as they accompany the organization and communication of their thoughts.

3) Hermeneutic Capacities: Students will be able to discuss and analyze a selection of literary and cultural works along with relevant formal concepts and historical context. Students will improve their skills in interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating cultural, historical, and literary works. They will develop their capacity to ask pertinent and interesting questions and to argue for and against various interpretations. They will recognize the extent to which the parts and wholes of works relate to one another.

4) Intellectual Virtues: Students will improve their capacities to process difficult materials, recognize complex patterns, ferret out contradictions, gain unexpected insights, formulate clear questions, listen carefully and attentively, explore ideas through dialogue, and express their thoughts eloquently and persuasively. In pursuing these and other course goals, students will develop various intellectual virtues, such as perseverance, intellectual hospitality, diplomacy, patience, curiosity, and wonder.

Principles of Student Learning

The course will be organized in accordance with several common-sense pedagogical principles, most of which were embodied already by Socrates and which have been given empirical verification in our age:

- **Active Learning:** Students are not passive minds into whose heads content is to be poured. Students learn by becoming involved, asking questions, engaging in discussions, solving problems, defending positions, writing and rewriting papers, in short, by energetically devoting themselves to the learning process. Educators speak of active or student-centered learning. Students learn most effectively when they are actively engaged, not simply listening or absorbing material. Accordingly, this course will be student-centered, with considerable focus on student-student discussion, regular written contributions, and paper topics chosen by students.

- **Peer Learning:** Students learn greatly from their peers, and we will do considerable amounts of group work. Indeed, the research shows that the student’s peer group is the single greatest source of influence on cognitive and affective development in college.
Existential Engagement: Students learn more when they are existentially engaged in the subject, when they care about the questions under discussion and recognize their significance. If you volunteer in a soup kitchen, your course on the economics of poverty takes on a different meaning. If you spend a semester in Berlin, German history and politics become far more important to you. To that end and because of their intrinsic value, we will read these works not only to understand them in their own context, as interesting as that is, but also to ask, to what extent they speak to us today. Can we learn not only about these works, but also from them? That means relating these works to your past experiences, daily lives, and future aspirations, without falling into a purely subjective interpretation of the meaning.

Intrinsic Motivation: Motivation plays a large role in learning. The best learning comes not from external motivation, seeking external approbation and praise, but from intrinsic motivation, from identification with a vision of wanting to learn.

High Expectations and Feedback: Students learn the most when their teachers have high academic expectations of them and when students receive helpful feedback that supports them in their quest to meet those high expectations. To know what you don’t know is to help focus your learning. A combination of being challenged and being supported helps learning immensely. You can be sure that if the coach of an athletic team is nonchalant about physical fitness, discipline, timing, teamwork, and the like, the team will not win many games. So, too, an easy A will not help you in the long run, as you interview for highly competitive postgraduate fellowships or positions at the best graduate schools or with the leading firms. The best way to learn is to shoot high and to recognize what might still be needed to meet those high aspirations. Detailed feedback and discriminating grades are ways of pointing out strengths and weaknesses to students, challenging them to stretch, so that they are not lulled into thinking that their current capacities cannot be improved, and they needn’t learn more.

Effortful Learning: Many think that easier paths to learning make for better learning. In truth, the evidence shows that easier learning is often superficial and quickly forgotten, whereas effortful learning leads to deeper and more durable learning as well as greater mastery and better applications. For example, making an effort to answer a question before being led to an answer leads to better learning. Hard learning—making mistakes and correcting them—is not wasted effort but important work; it improves your intelligence. Striving to surpass your current abilities and experiencing setbacks are part of true learning, which, unlike superficial learning, develops and changes the brain, building new connections and increasing intellectual capacities. For better learning, difficulties are desirable: the harder the effort, the greater the benefit. For example, instead of simply reviewing notes on our readings, you might reflect on the reading: What are the key ideas? What ideas are new to me? How would I explain them to someone else? How does what I read relate to what I already know? What questions do I have? What arguments speak for and against a given position?

Breadth of Context: If you put what you are learning into a larger context and connect it with what you already know and are learning in your other courses, your learning will be
deeper and more stable. If you can connect a story, an idea, or a principle as you uncover it to other stories, ideas, and principles or to what you yourself think, then the stories, ideas, and principles will more likely resonate for you in the future. In our class, seeing connections across works as well as seeing connections between our discussions and works in other classes as well as your own life will help give you that larger context. The more you know, the more you can learn. Ask yourself, what larger lessons can be drawn from what I am exploring.

• **Faculty-Student Contact.** The greatest predictor of student satisfaction with college is frequent interaction with faculty members. Students are more motivated, more committed, and more involved and seem to learn more when they have a connection to faculty members. So take advantage of opportunities to connect with your teachers. Drop in during my office hours (come when you have a need or a question or simply when you would like to chat). Take advantage as well of other opportunities we will find for informal conversations. And don’t hesitate to ask for help. *Every student should visit me at least once during office hours. This visit can be to introduce yourself to me early in the semester, to explore a possible paper topic, to review a paper revision, to discuss a Referat, to think through what is or is not helping you meet the learning goals of the course, to consider opportunities for summer study or honors theses or post-graduate experiences in Germany, or for any other reason you might choose. If you don’t have a reason, simply come, and we will discuss the course or your trajectory in German. You will find me to be very approachable.*

• **Meaningful Investment of Time:** Students who major in disciplines that are less demanding of students’ time tend to make fewer cognitive gains in college. Everyone who wants to learn a complex and demanding subject must make a substantial effort. Learning occurs not only during class time. It derives also from the investment you make in learning, the quality of the time you spend reading, thinking, writing, and speaking with others outside of class. For this three-credit advanced course you will want to spend more than six hours per week preparing. An advantage you have in this course is that the works are challenging, fascinating, and enjoyable, so your study can be work and pleasure simultaneously.

• **Diversity:** Another learning principle is diversity. When you discover that your roommate is Muslim, you suddenly become more curious about Islam. Such encounters occur less frequently at Notre Dame, so we need to cultivate intellectual diversity, engaging works from other cultures and in languages other than English. We want to hear different perspectives from one another, even the most unusual, since thinking outside the box can help us see more clearly. Do not be shy about asking off-the-wall questions or making unusual comments. And don’t let contrary views bother you emotionally. All such contributions can be useful, as the process of discovering truth involves listening to various perspectives. In addition, many of the issues we will study introduce us to worldviews radically different from our own, but precisely in their difference, they may provide interesting antidotes to some of the cliches of the present.

• **Self-Reflection:** Students learn more when they are aware of how they best learn (so that they can focus their energies), what they most lack, and how they can learn more. How
can I become a better student? How can I learn to guide myself also after I graduate? We may occasionally have meta-discussions in which we reflect on your learning or on our discussions at a higher level. Around what central interpretive question did the debate we were just having revolve? Why did we relinquish one interpretation and adopt another? How would we describe the evidence that spoke for and against the various positions? Why was today’s discussion particularly successful or less successful? What is helping us learn? The latter question underscores why I have just placed these principles before you.

We will pursue each of these dimensions. Above all, your learning will depend on your active engagement. To that end the following contributions to learning will affect the assessment of your performance.

**Student Contributions to Learning and Assessment Guidelines**

Nearly half of the grade will be based on daily contributions, oral and written, during the semester. 40% will be based on more formal written work, where you will be asked to perform at the highest possible level. 15% will be devoted to assessing your comprehensive understanding of the material and your attainment of learning goals.

You should have a good sense of your overall performance along the way, as 70% of your grade involves your work during the semester, with 30% reserved for your final paper and final exam collectively.

1) **Class Contribution**: 20%;

Students will be expected to contribute regularly to discussions and to adopt various facilitative roles during the semester. Each student will give one formal presentation or Referat, but there will be many informal presentations.

Active and meaningful engagement in the classroom is one of the strongest indicators of good learning. Active engagement will help you develop your German and allow you to test your ideas. Because student learning is aided by active student participation in the classroom, students will want to prepare well and contribute regularly and meaningfully to discussions.

Class contribution is not equivalent with the quantity of class participation; instead both quantity and quality will be considered.

Any in-class written exercises that might take place would be brief and informal and would count toward the category of class contribution.

After the review of the syllabus, the language for this class will be German.

2) **Regular Written Contributions**: 25%

For each class, beginning with our second class, that is, our discussion of current politics, students will prepare three well-crafted sentences with insights or questions. They may be interwoven to form a brief paragraph, or they may be isolated or independent observations. You
may include questions designed to elicit discussion (that is, open-ended, questions that encourage analysis and debate) or statements that explore the following: an insight that you have into the work, an idea that you find compelling or less compelling, an aspect of the work that struck you as unusually significant, a comparison with earlier passages or works, etc. I will almost always offer you some pre-reading questions; students have found it very useful to address one or more of these questions.

These daily exercises will help your class preparation, allow you to explore ideas, and will be a superb strategy to aid you in your developing language skills. These daily exercises will always be in German, typed and double-spaced, and brought to each class.

We will occasionally draw on your comments in class, and I will collect them regularly to provide you with feedback.

You will want to keep all of your contributions in a folder and in order. I may ask you to offer a self-analysis of your strengths and weaknesses.

If you run into an occasional printing snag, I will be happy to receive your e-mail immediately before or after class. However, these should be very rare exceptions. I will not accept e-mail submissions on a regular basis.

In a few cases I have added the stipulation “Tandem Submissions.” Students should prepare for class together in groups of two or three and present one set of comments or questions. In a few other cases I have listed “Student Questions.” In these cases students are to prepare not comments but specifically study and discussion questions.

Please note that on any days when papers are due at class time (this would only involve revisions), no short contributions are to be submitted. Also your handouts will function as your submissions on the three days of student explorations. And on the day you deliver your presentation, you are free from having to submit a written submission on the regular material.

3) **Three Papers: 40%;**

Students will write three papers. These will be excellent opportunities to practice very good German and to pursue thoughts in greater detail. These papers will count in sequence, 12%, 13%, and 15%. The first paper will be at least 750 words, the second at least 1,000 words, and the third at least 1,250 words. You should list at the bottom of each essay the number of words your essay contains. These word lengths correspond approximately to three pages, four pages, and five pages, respectively.

Students will choose their own topics by focusing on one or more topics we have explored together in class.

All papers should be Times New Roman or a similar standard font, 12 point, and double spaced.

Each paper should have a title and pagination. You will want to use MLA style. (MLA stands for the Modern Language Association.) This style is widespread in the humanities and relatively
simple and user-friendly. The library has reference materials that spell out MLA style, such as the *MLA Handbook* or the *MLA Style Manual*, and there are short versions available on the Web. I have a few copies students may borrow upon request. With permission, students may choose an alternative format.

The first two papers are to be rewritten after you receive my comments and then resubmitted within one week of their return to you. Rewriting is an excellent strategy to improve your capacity for writing. The grade will be adjusted based on the revision.

The papers are due as printed documents at class time. Late submissions of all papers will be downgraded a partial grade (for example, from a B to a B-), with a further drop of a partial grade for each 24 hours that passes beyond the due date and time.

**4) Final Oral Examination 15%**

Each student will have a one-on-one final oral examination of approximately twenty minutes in German, during which the kinds of questions discussed in class will be engaged. The questions will be oriented to the class material and the learning goals above. It should be an excellent opportunity for you to develop your ideas in conversation and for us to assess your learning. Final oral examinations will be scheduled between Wednesday, May 2, and Friday, May 11. Everyone seeking an examination time before the conclusion of our scheduled examination slot, Wednesday, May 9, at 6:15, will receive one.

The goals of each assignment and of all evaluation are to improve understanding and performance. For more detailed comments on these assignments and on assessment guidelines, see below.

**Required Works**

Most of our works will be available via Sakai, most often in the Readings Folder under Resources. Some readings, with links, are available on the Web.

Manfred Mai’s *Deutsche Geschichte* (Weinheim: Beltz & Gelberg, 2012) is readable, accessible, and ideal for your level. We will read excerpts from this book, and I will have copies available for you. In addition, a recorded version of the book is on Sakai. This offers you a great way to practice your listening comprehension.

In Spring 2017 the Department made a decision to use only one reference grammar in all advanced classes, *Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik*, by Jamie Rankin (who also created the Web textbook currently being used in our first three semesters) and Larry D. Wells (6th Edition) 2016. 978-1-305-078840. If you are an underclassman or if you would like to own a good reference work for postgraduate learning, you will want to buy this text, which is available as a paper or electronic copy. If you are a graduating senior and do not want to purchase the work, please let me know, as we may have a few copies for temporary loan during this initial transition period.

**Recommended Works and Further Learning**
Schulze, Hagen. *Germany: A New History*. Trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001. I have placed a print copy on reserve. This is the English book that the Department chose to help students develop knowledge of German history. It is the only English-language history book that will be assigned in our classes. I also placed the German copy of reserve for those of you who might want to complete reading the German version in future years.

Deick, Christian. *Deutsche Geschichte: Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*. 3rd ed. Ravensbrug: Ravensburger, 2008. After Mai, which we will be using, I find this to be the best overview of Germany history for students at your level. It has good pictures as well.

In addition, you will find good basic materials on Germany history (in German and in English) at the *Tatsachen über Deutschland Website*.

Since one of the secondary goals of this course is to help set you up for further independent learning about contemporary Germany, you will want to be well versed in the Deutsche Welle *Deutsch Aktuell* site, which we will use a few times and which has print, audio, and video materials, often very brief, that provide you with information about Germany, especially contemporary Germany. Its vocabulary aids are extremely helpful.

**Sakai**

I have placed some materials on Sakai and will continue to do so on an occasional basis.

Under Resources, you will find the following folders: Exercises; Images; Learning Resources for Content; Learning Resources for Language; Optional Reading; Readings; Student List with Emails; Study Questions; Syllabus; and Vocabulary.

You will want to spend some time exploring this site. At various times I may draw your attention to one or another folder or file. The Readings Folder includes the readings for almost all of the classes. Any readings that you do not find in the Readings Folder on Sakai, you will find under Reserve Reading. I will try to alert you to these exceptions. I will not alert you when I add readings to either destination unless they are close to the date of their being assigned. Study Questions include pre-reading questions to help guide your thinking as you process and prepare the works. Under Vocabulary I have already added a general vocabulary list of words for German literature and culture, by frequency level, that you are likely to encounter in this class and beyond.

The three films we will view are currently available on Sakai, via “Library Reserves.” Once you click the title and accept the terms, the video will play in your web browser. You need to ensure that you have the Quicktime Video plugin installed. OIT recommends that you use Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox to ensure compatibility. In the unlikely event that you have issues with streaming videos, you can always use a computer in one of the labs on campus.

I have bought an extra copy of each DVD. If you wish, I can hand out a copy in class, and you can view the film at a time or at times you agree upon among yourselves. Students in previous
semesters have sometimes enjoyed the collective screenings, in some cases multiple viewing sessions with different groups of students.

**Library Course Guide**

Julie Tanaka, who will host the session when the class visits the Library, has prepared a course guide for our course. Please spend some time reviewing this guide, which will be extraordinarily helpful for you, both in this course and beyond. You can find the guide [here](#).

**Policy on Attendance and Tardiness**

One unexcused absence will not affect your grade in any way. A second or third unexcused absence will be integrated into your class contribution grade, as will any recurring problems with late arrivals. A fourth unexcused absence will lead to the reduction of the final grade by one partial unit, for example, from a B to a B-. A fifth unexcused absence will lead to the reduction of the final grade by two partial units, for example, from a B to a C+. A sixth unexcused absence will lead to the reduction of the final grade by four partial units, for example, from a B to a C-. Seven unexcused absences will lead to failure of the course.

Personal absences and non-acute medical conditions (such as an ordinary cold or a headache) do not represent excused absences; however, acute medical conditions or contagious medical conditions are excused but require documentation, as is spelled out in the *Academic Articles*. Excused absences for medical or other reasons will not affect your grade in any way.

If you are ever absent, be it excused or unexcused, it is your responsibility to find out from a colleague what you missed.

We will begin class on time. If you are late, it is your responsibility to touch base with a peer to see what you have missed. Recurring tardiness will affect your class contribution grade.

**Grading**

**Grading System of the University of Notre Dame**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanatory Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Truly Exceptional</td>
<td>Work meets or exceeds the highest expectations for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.667</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Superior work in all areas of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.333</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Superior work in most areas of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Solid work across the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.667</td>
<td>More than Acceptable</td>
<td>More than acceptable, but falls short of solid work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.333</td>
<td>Acceptable: Meets All</td>
<td>Work meets all the basic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Basic Standards requirements and standards for the course.

C 2.000 Acceptable: Meets Most Basic Standards Work meets most of the basic requirements and standards in several areas.

C- 1.667 Acceptable: Meets Some Basic Standards While acceptable, work falls short of meeting basic standards in several areas.

D 1.000 Minimally Passing Work just over the threshold of acceptability.

F 0 Failure Unacceptable performance.

Criteria for Grading Class Contribution

Criteria for a Grade of B

The student ...

prepares well for each class by completing all assignments; rereading or reviewing, when appropriate; and making appropriate notes;
does not miss classes for any unexcused reasons and comes to each class on time;
makes daily contributions that show thorough familiarity with the assigned reading and thoughtful reflection on the material;
asks good, searching questions that spark and advance discussion;
is able to analyze and recognize flaws and mistakes when sample sentences are given;
is able to answer difficult questions;
listens well and exhibits by facial expressions and body posture the active art of listening;
participates in the give-and-take of discussion, for example, by offering initial comments, asking clarifying questions of other students, offering evidence to support positions, or proposing alternative perspectives;
is willing to engage an issue from multiple points of view;
is able to make connections across works;
can recognize strengths and weaknesses in an argument;
demonstrates the capacity to think on his or her feet;
speaks directly to other students and not simply to the teacher;
is more interested in the group dynamic of truth seeking through dialogue than in demonstrating his or her own excellence;
exhibits respect, tact, and diplomacy in debate with others.

The student is able to express his or her thoughts clearly and with good pronunciation, so that everyone understands. The student makes very basic grammatical errors only occasionally. The student exhibits good progress in accuracy and fluency over the course of the semester.

Criteria for a Grade of A

The student does all of the above and ...
regularly takes a leadership role in discussions through quality and quantity of contributions; 
exhibits intellectual hospitality, effectively encouraging the participation of others and 
successfully drawing good ideas out of others; 
gives unusually deep and rich responses to interpretive and searching questions; 
consistently links the discussion to earlier works and themes; 
asks fascinating and unexpected questions; 
is forthcoming with excellent insights and questions; 
acts as an artisan of the common good.

The student communicates exceptionally well, speaking in such a way as to be clearly understood 
by others. The student has excellent pronunciation and exhibits very few basic grammatical 
errors. The student progresses in accuracy and fluency over the course of the semester.

Criteria for a Grade of C

The student ...

comes prepared to class; 
occasionally contributes isolated, but thoughtful, comments to the discussion; 
makes comments that are backed with evidence; 
discerns the difference between more relevant and less relevant comments; 
exhibits respect for others and treats all persons with dignity.

The student is able to make him or herself understood, although grammatical errors and 
vocabulary gaps are frequent; the student exhibits only modest progress in the capacity for oral 
expression.

Criteria for a Grade of D

The student ...

comes to class, but rarely contributes to the discussion; 
has difficulties contributing to the flow of the conversation; 
has difficulty giving evidence for his or her claims.

The student’s speech is riddled with errors and rarely shows progress or improvement.

Criteria for a Grade of F

The student ...

does not speak at all or makes comments that exhibit a lack of preparation; 
exhibits little or no respect for the class.

The student’s speech is riddled with errors and rarely shows progress or improvement.

Criteria for Grading Short Written Contributions
Each daily contribution will be given a mark of Check, Check Plus, or Check Minus. On very rare occasions I may give a Check Double Plus or a Check Double Minus. A non-submission will be recorded as a Check Double Minus.

- Check = Good insights and adequate control of grammar, with mistakes not overly abundant and sentence structure not being of minimal complexity. Good Work.

- Check Plus = Excellent insights and excellent control of grammar, with mistakes mainly involving modest issues or arising from ambitious formulations. Excellent Work.

- Check Double Plus = Extraordinary insights and extraordinary command of grammar. Exceeds even the most ambitious expectations.

- Check Minus = Little intellectual insight or effort and/or overabundant mistakes. These submissions may be rewritten for the next class after they have been returned. If you choose to resubmit, return both the original and the revision, stapling or clipping the two together. The highest possible grade for a revision would be a check.

- Check Double Minus = No submission, no serious insights, and/or overly abundant mistakes. Unacceptable work for the 30000-level. These submissions may be rewritten for the next class after they have been returned. If you choose to resubmit, return both the original and the revision, stapling or clipping the two together. The highest possible grade for a revision would be a check.

The collection of short written contributions will then be translated into letter grades, using the criteria below.

**Criteria for a Grade of B**

The student ...

prepares comments and/or questions in advance of each class and according to the guidelines;

makes contributions that show thorough familiarity with the assigned material and thoughtful reflection on it;

makes insightful observations on the works;

is willing to engage an issue from multiple points of view;

is able to make connections across the works of the semester;

asks good, searching questions;

offers compelling analyses;

draws interesting comparisons;

can recognize strengths and weaknesses in an argument;

is able to marshal evidence in favor of a position.

The student writes in a language that is understandable, varying in structure, and avoids a high number of grammatical and stylistic errors, especially those that are basic in nature or have been discussed in class. The style is not pedestrian or overly simple but exhibits a range of
grammatical structures, including some complexity. The student exhibits, where necessary, increasing consistency and improvement in writing.

Across time the student receives more check pluses than checks.

Criteria for a Grade of A

The student does all of the above and ...

offers unusually rich and intelligent observations;
consistently links the discussion to earlier works and themes as well as issues of greater significance;
asks fascinating and unexpected questions;
gives evidence of a searching mind, the mind of a developing intellectual.

The student exhibits a developing capacity for smooth and interesting writing, with only occasional mistakes.

The student almost always receives a check plus.

Criteria for a Grade of C

The student ...

contributes regularly and conscientiously, but for the most part makes observations and asks questions that fall below the criteria for a B grade.

The student exhibits a fair control of grammatical structures, but with limited variation in sentence structure. One sees little use of new or complex vocabulary. Spelling is poor. The contributions have far too many errors that should not be surfacing at this stage.

The student will have received very few check pluses and is likely to have received some check minuses.

Criteria for a Grade of D

The student ...

contributes most of the time but still misses some sessions;
exhibits basic knowledge of the material;
makes primarily pedestrian comments.

The student exhibits poor control of grammatical structures and little variation in sentence structure. Basic problems in grammar, spelling, or punctuation surface regularly.

The student will generally have received mainly checks and check minuses.
Criteria for a Grade of F

The student...

frequently fails to contribute to the discussions;
contributes comments that show a lack of knowledge of the material;
makes observations that are unhelpful in advancing the discussion or irrelevant.

The student exhibits very poor control of grammatical structures and little variation in sentence structure. Problems in grammar, spelling, or punctuation interfere with the writer’s capacity to communicate.

The student will have received few, if any, check pluses and a very high number of check minuses.

Criteria for Grading Papers

Criteria for a Grade of B

Clarity

The paper presents a clear thesis.

Complexity

Though clear, the thesis is also complex and challenging, not simplistic. The arguments integrate both content and form of the works. Multiple points of view are engaged, and the limits of one’s own interpretation are acknowledged, either through the avoidance of overreaching or through the refutation of alternative arguments. The essay integrates a variety of connected themes and exhibits a curious mind at work.

Structure

The title is effective. The introduction is inviting and compelling, appropriate and succinct. The essay is structured logically and coherently, with good analyses. The overall outline or organization makes sense, and the paragraphs flow appropriately, one to the other. The conclusion is powerful.

Evidence

Appropriate support is given for the paper’s claims, for example, evidence from the work being interpreted, historical information, or a chain of abstract arguments. The analytical framework is strong and convincing.

Independence
The paper does not simply restate the obvious or repeat what others have said, but builds on what is known to exhibit the student’s own thinking about the topic. The writer avoids simply repeating plot structures or paraphrasing the ideas of others. The student exhibits some level of independence and a new perspective.

The essay exhibits good usage and variety of vocabulary, displays solid control of grammatical structures, with some variation in sentence structure, and the number of mistakes is modest, most of them being understandable at this level and not basic mistakes. As the semester advances, fewer mistakes occur.

**Criteria for a Grade of A**

The paper integrates the expectations of a B grade, but is in addition highly effective in communicating meaningful ideas, impressively original, and unusually engaging. The paper is thoughtful, deep, creative, and far-reaching in its analysis and evidence.

The language exhibits a developing capacity for smooth and sophisticated writing, and mistakes are very few in number.

**Criteria for a Grade of C**

The thesis of the paper is clear, and the paper takes a stand on a complex issue. The writer exhibits some competence in exploring the subject. Most of the essay is well-organized, and the logic is for the most part clear and coherent. Some evidence is given for the points made in the essay. The argument is sustained but not imaginative or complex. The paper exhibits clear weaknesses; these might include, for example, plot summary, simplicity, repetition, false assumptions, a derivative quality, or avoidance of alternative perspectives that should be considered. The writer barely goes beyond paraphrase. While some of the criteria for a B grade may have been fulfilled, a majority has not.

Errors include both more complex areas of advanced writing as well as basic issues that should be part of the student’s repertoire at the 30000-level. Examples of basic errors that occur frequently at the C-level involve gender, case, adjective endings, verb conjugations, appropriate helping verbs, subject-verb agreement, word order, and punctuation, that is, items that students should be able to control, at the very least by consulting dictionaries and an editing check list.

**Criteria for a Grade of D**

The thesis of the paper is missing, unclear, or overly simple. The writer tends toward plot summary and paraphrase. The paper includes some arguments, but counter-arguments are not considered in any serious way or are misconstrued. The essay’s structure is not readily apparent. Ideas are present but are not developed with details or examples. Paragraphs are poorly constructed and contain little supporting detail.

Sentences are riddled with grammatical mistakes.

The paper is inadequate in length.
Criteria for a Grade of F

The assignment is not completed or is completed in a format that is clearly substandard. The essay exhibits little, if any, preparatory reflection or study. It contains no serious ideas and lacks an argument as well as supporting evidence. The essay is difficult to read or comprehend. No meaningful structure is discernible.

Problems in grammar, spelling, or punctuation interfere with the writer’s capacity to communicate.

Criteria for a Grade of C

The thesis of the paper is clear, and the paper takes a stand on a complex issue. The writer exhibits some competence in exploring the subject. Most of the essay is well-organized, and the logic is for the most part clear and coherent. Some evidence is given for the points made in the essay. The argument is sustained but not imaginative or complex. The paper exhibits clear weaknesses; these might include, for example, plot summary, simplicity, repetition, false assumptions, a derivative quality, or avoidance of alternative perspectives that should be considered. The writer barely goes beyond paraphrase. While some of the criteria for a B grade may have been fulfilled, a majority has not.

Errors include both more complex areas of advanced writing as well as basic issues that should be part of the student’s repertoire at the 30000-level. Examples of basic errors that occur frequently at the C-level involve gender, case, adjective endings, verb conjugations, appropriate helping verbs, subject-verb agreement, word order, and punctuation, that is, items that students should be able to control, at the very least by consulting dictionaries and an editing check list.

Criteria for a Grade of D

The thesis of the paper is missing, unclear, or overly simple. The writer tends toward plot summary and paraphrase. The paper includes some arguments, but counter-arguments are not considered in any serious way or are misconstrued. The essay’s structure is not readily apparent. Ideas are present but are not developed with details or examples. Paragraphs are poorly constructed and contain little supporting detail.

Sentences are riddled with grammatical mistakes.

The paper is inadequate in length.

Criteria for a Grade of F

The assignment is not completed or is completed in a format that is clearly substandard. The essay exhibits little, if any, preparatory reflection or study. It contains no serious ideas and lacks an argument as well as supporting evidence. The essay is difficult to read or comprehend. No meaningful structure is discernible.
Problems in grammar, spelling, or punctuation interfere with the writer’s capacity to communicate.

**Academic Code of Honor**

This course will be conducted in accordance with Notre Dame’s *Academic Code of Honor*, which stipulates: “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty ... The pledge to uphold the *Academic Code of Honor* includes an understanding that a student’s submitted work, graded or ungraded – examinations, draft copies, papers, homework assignments, extra credit work, etc. – must be his or her own.” The code is available [here](#). Information on citing sources and avoiding plagiarism is available [here](#).

Students are encouraged to discuss readings and films with one another outside of class and should feel free to discuss assignments (including papers) with one another, but the source of all ideas must be revealed fully and honestly. Whenever information or insights are obtained from secondary works or Web sources, students should cite their sources. Also, if you talk about the material with a friend, and that person suggests an idea, you should formally acknowledge that person’s idea if you use it in your paper. If an idea is presented in class discussion, and you wish to reuse it in your paper, you should also acknowledge the source of this idea. Any unacknowledged help will be considered a violation of the honor code. The style and grammar of your papers should be entirely your own. The only exceptions would be assistance provided by me. Peer tutors would be useful to you to help you with readings or for content-driven conversations to help you improve your oral skills and your knowledge, but the peer tutors should not assist you with your papers. If you have difficulties with revisions, you may ask a peer tutor, but in such a case, you must document with a note the precise assistance offered.

Students are encouraged to prepare for the final oral examination collectively. However, students who have taken their examination may not discuss the exam in any way with other students until all examinations have been given.

**Syllabus Supplement**

On Sakai, under Syllabus I have posted a syllabus supplement, with some additional, helpful information on Learning and Mastering a Language; Writing in German; and 30000-Level Student Learning Outcomes.

**Appendix: Student Presentations and Explorations**

**Student Presentations**

*Students will be asked to give one brief formal presentation, with a one-page written hand-out in German and oral delivery in German of approximately 5-6 minutes.* Students who are not prepared to deliver on schedule will be graded accordingly, since delays will affect the contextual learning of your peers. The topics will be distributed on a first come, first served basis. If you are open to any topic, I will, after students with preferences have expressed them, simply make assignments. Options are below.
Angela Merkel (January 19)

Paul Celan (January 26)

Rainer Werner Fassbinder (January 29)

Der Auschwitzprozess in Frankfurt (February 2)

Wolf Biermann (February 9)

Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck (February 16)

Helmut Kohl (February 21)

Papst Benedikt XVI (March 28)

Fatih Akin (April 6)

For the formal presentations themselves, here are some basic expectations.

- If you go over eight minutes, I may stop you midstream. Discipline in delivery is a virtue, so do not be surprised.
- Do not read your text; instead learn to speak from notes.
- Choose items that you yourself would be interested in hearing, not items that you somehow think should be included for the sake of completeness. Choose what is essential and interesting, what you would want to know about the person.
- Define any words that you think your peers might not know and speak clearly, loudly, and slowly, so that everyone understands you. (Your presentation after all is intended more for your classmates than for me.)
- To prepare your presentation, use primarily the reference section of the Library. Web resources are uneven, whereas books selected for the reference area will have gone through a more elaborate peer review process. This will also allow you to gain some sense of available resources for the future. Obviously any images are likely to be found on the Web.
- Please list your sources on the second page of your handout.
- PowerPoint is not obligatory but has tended to be well received by other students.

I will give you some basic feedback on grammar, pronunciation, content, and delivery. In past semesters, suggestions on delivery have included, for example, the following: speak at a reasonable pace, that is, slowly enough so that your peers can follow you; finish your presentation within the allotted time (this may mean a private trial run); present less material so that the more important issues are highlighted; speak freely instead of reading the presentation (speaking freely is not only a valuable skill, your audience will be able to absorb your ideas more easily); and introduce and define new vocabulary words, so that your peers are able to absorb everything you say.
For further, amusing tips, you can consult the two Kurt Tucholsky texts under Sakai (Optional Reading), which I have posted in both German and English.

**Student Explorations**

Three times during the semester students will prepare exploration topics. They may do so individually or in groups of two. Your preparation will involve a one-page handout along with a readiness to speak to peers informally about the topic, without, however, reading your hand-out. Here, too, assignments will be given on a first come, first served basis. Options include:

**First Session** (Culture)

Karl Barth (Theology)
Andreas Paul Weber (Art)
Hans Jonas (Philosophy)
Willy Brandt (Politics)
Gottfried Böhm (Architecture)
Joseph Beuys (Art)
Karlheinz Stockhausen (Music)
Friedensreich Hundertwasser (Architecture)
Christa Wolf (Literature)
Rote Armee Fraktion (Politics)
Loriot (Television)
Jürgen Habermas (Philosophy)
Franz Josef Degenhardt (Music)
Rudolf Bahro (Politics)
Georg Baselitz (Art)

**Second Session** (Geography)

Baden-Württemberg

Bayern
Berlin
Brandenburg
Bremen
Hamburg
Hessen
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
Niedersachsen
Nordrhein-Westfalen
Rheinland-Pfalz
Saarland
Sachsen
Sachsen-Anhalt
Schleswig-Holstein
Thüringen

Any of the German-speaking cities that rank among the top ten in the world as listed in the 2017 Mercer Quality of Living Ranking:

1. Wien
2. Zürich
4. München
6. Düsseldorf
7. Frankfurt am Main
10. Basel

Third Session (Culture)

Reinhard Mey (Music)
Hanna Schygulla (Acting)
Gerhard Richter (Art)
Anselm Kiefer (Art)
Wolfgang Laib (Art)
Thomas Struth (Photography)
Doris Dörrie (Film)
Nina Hagen (Music)
Herbert Grönemeyer (Music)
Thomas Grünfeld (Art)
Steffi Graf (Sports)
Jüdisches Museum Berlin (Museum)
Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas (Memorial)
documenta in Kassel (Art)

This exercise is designed as much to awaken your curiosity as to solidify knowledge. Still, any comments you can make to connect your material with other material and class discussions would be welcome.