History 71600
Modern Germany
Fall 2012, Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30

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office hours Wednesdays 4:30-6:30 or by appointment

This course provides an advanced survey of the history of modern Germany, with an emphasis on recent historiographical trends. We will cover the period from (roughly) the early 19th Century to (roughly) the present. The course is designed to meet the needs of both students intending to specialize in modern German history and those with other or related primary interests in modern Europe.

By the end of the course, students should be able:

- To articulate some of the main themes and problems relating to the research and writing of modern German history, particularly in the last two decades.
- To identify the major topics, themes, and sub-themes debated by contemporary historians of modern Germany.
- Prepare and write a substantial historiographical analysis on a topic chosen by the student.
- Identify major archival sources relevant to the research of modern German history.

**Required texts:** (they have been ordered from the Barnes & Noble store at 6 East 18th Street, but you may find better deals elsewhere…)

- Helmut Walser Smith, *The Continuities of German History* (CUP, 2008)
- David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History* (OUP, 1984)
- Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis* (HUP, 1997)

All other readings will be available online or via Blackboard.

The course assumes a basic familiarity with the main narrative of modern European and modern German history. You may want to have at hand some reference materials on these themes. Recommended textbooks or large scale narratives include James J. Sheehan, *German History 1770-1866*; Gordon Craig, *Germany 1866-1945*; David

Students with a long-term intellectual and professional interest in the history of modern German-speaking Europe should get into the habit of keeping up with the following journals:

- *Central European History*
- *German History*
- *German Studies Review*
- *New German Critique*
- *German Politics and Society*
- *Journal of Modern History*
- *Journal of Contemporary History*
- *Historical Journal*
- *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*
- *Shofar*
- *Yad Vashem Studies*
- *Yearbook of the Leo Baeck Institute*
- *Archiv fuer Sozialgeschichte*
- *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*
- *Historische Zeitschrift*
- *Vierteljahreshefte fuer Zeitgeschichte*
- *Tel Avivier Jahrbuch fuer Zeitgeschichte*
- *Zeitschrift fuer Geschichtswissenschaft*

In addition, students should join one or more relevant listserves, the main lists being H-German and H-Soz-u-Kult (and there are others related to German-speaking Europe) via www.h-net.msu.edu. It is also worth acquainting yourself with the activities and publications of major institutions devoted to the study of modern Germany, among them the German Historical Institute (www.ghi-dc.org), the German Studies Association (https://thegsa.org), the Leo Baeck Institute (www.lbi.org), the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (http://www.ushmm.org/research/center) the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies (www.aicgs.org) and the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (http://www.ifz-muenchen.de).
You can search for recent books and articles on topics of interest in the *Jahresberichte für deutsche Geschichte*, available online at [http://jdgdb.bbaw.de/cgi-bin/jdg/cgi-bin/jdg](http://jdgdb.bbaw.de/cgi-bin/jdg/cgi-bin/jdg).

You are encouraged as well to explore the primary documents and images collected by the German Historical Institute at [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/), and the large and growing collection of documents available from the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, especially in the “Zeugenschriftum:” [http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/zeugenschrifttum_online.html](http://www.ifz-muenchen.de/zeugenschrifttum_online.html).

**Course requirements and grading:**

The format of our weekly meetings will be discussion-based. It is imperative that you come to class on time and be prepared to contribute to discussing the week's topics and readings.

This course presumes a basic familiarity with modern German and European history. I recommend you purchase for reference recent surveys, such as John Merriman’s *A History of Modern Europe, Volume 2: From the French Revolution to the Present* (W.W. Norton & Co., 1996) and/or David G. Williamson’s *Germany Since 1815: A Nation Forged and Renewed* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

Your **final grade** will be determined as follows:

- Participation: 40%
- On time submission of final paper topic: 5%
- On time submission of preliminary bibliography: 15%
- Final paper: 40%

Unless truly exceptional circumstances arise, **no “incomplete” course grades or late papers will be accepted**. Unless arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor, all assignments must be completed as specified in the syllabus and the style and formatting guide. No make-up or extra credit assignments will be given.

**Participation:** Discussion and debate of reading assignments with instructors and peers is an essential component of your intellectual development and professionalization. Therefore each student is expected to come to class on time participate in *every* class meeting in an informed manner.
Final paper:

For the final paper, I want you to write a 15-20 page historiographical analysis on a subject of your choosing. The objective is to acquaint you with the current state of research and writing on a particular theme, event, individual, or problem. For those interested in developing research or conference papers or in exploring possible dissertation topics, this is an ideal place to start. The assignment also provides an opportunity to explore a topic that we did not cover extensively in class.

Roughly speaking, your paper should introduce your subject briefly, discuss the significance of the problem and summarize the trajectory of the scholarly debates surrounding it. The bulk of the paper should be devoted to an analysis of the most recent scholarship. You may then conclude with a discussion of areas in need of more investigation. The basic template for an essay of this kind is the sort of review essay regularly published by journals such as The Journal of Modern History or Central European History.

Class Meetings and Readings:

Wednesday August 29

Introduction: Historiographical Issues


Christopher Clark, “Introduction,” from Iron Kingdom

Helmut Walser Smith, The Continuities of German History, selections

Karen Hagemann & Jean Quataert, “Gendering Modern German History” in Hagemann & Quataert, eds., Gendering Modern German History: Rewriting Historiography

**Wednesday September 12**

From Revolution to Revolution

Hans Rosenberg, *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy and Autocracy*, selections

Timothy Blanning, *The French Revolution in Germany*, selections

Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals*, selections

Theodor Hamerow, *Restoration, Revolution, Reaction*, selections

**Wednesday September 19**

Bismarck and Unification

David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History*, entire.

Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire*, selections


**Wednesday September 26 CLASS CANCELLED GC CLOSED**

**Wednesday October 3**

Culture and Politics in Imperial Germany, Imperialism

Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, selections


Edward Ross Dickenson, “‘A Dark, Impenetrable Wall of Complete Incomprehension’: The Impossibility of Heterosexual Love in Imperial Germany,” CEH 40 (2007)

Wednesday October 10  CLASS CANCELLED GC ON MONDAY SCHED

Wednesday October 17

WWI Origins and Course

Fritz Fischer, *Germany’s Aims in the First World War*, and *War of Illusions*, selections

Gerhard Ritter, *The Sword and the Scepter*, vol II, selections


Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, introduction, chapters 7-8, and conclusion


Wednesday October 24

Impact of First World War, Revolution

Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, selections

Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic*, selections

Hans Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, selections

Eric Weitz, *Weimar Germany*, selections

Eberhard Kolb, *The Weimar Republic*, selections

Robert Whalen, *Bitter Words: German Victims of the Great War, 1914-1939*, selections

Wednesday October 31

Weimar Culture and the Rise of the Nazis

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*, entire

H.A. Turner, *Hitler’s Thirty Days to Power*, selections

Catherine Epstein, The Last Revolutionaries: German Communists and their Century, ch. 1.

Wednesday November 7

Third Reich in Power

Ian Kershaw, The Nazi Dictatorship, entire


Peter Fritzsche, Life and Death in the Third Reich, selections

Robert Gellately, The Gestapo and German Society, selections

Eric A. Johnson, Nazi Terror, selections

Wednesday November 14

WWII


Richard Overy, How the Allies Won, selections

Goetz Aly, Hitler’s Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State, preface and parts 3-4

Mark Mazower, Hitler’s Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe, selections

Wednesday November 21

Holocaust

Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front 1941-1945*, selections

Saul Friedländer, *The Years of Extermination*, selections

Christopher Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution*, selections

Alon Confino, “Fantasies about the Jews: Cultural Reflections on the Holocaust,” *History and Memory* 17, nos 1-2 (Fall 2005)


Wednesday November 28

Federal Republic


Atina Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany*, introduction and chapters 4-6

Hans Peter Schwarz, *Adenauer*, selections

Norbert Frei, *Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past* (New York, 2002), selections


Wednesday December 5

GDR and 1989

Andrew Port, *Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic*, selections

Charles Maier, *Dissolution*, selections.
Michael Meyer, *The Year That Changed the World: The Untold Story Behind the Fall of the Berlin Wall* (New York, 2009), selections.

**Wednesday December 12**

**Memory Wars**

Robert Moeller, “Germans as Victims? Thoughts on a Post-Cold War History of World War II’s Legacies,” *History & Memory*, vol. 17, nos. 1/2 (2005) [whole issue is on German memory]


Charles Maier, *The Unmasterable Past*, selections