



Term 1 2023-2024

Course Code & Title:	GERM1100 Germany Today	
Language of Instruction:	English	Units: 3

Course Description

Germany was a once divided nation with complex historical background and rich culture which continuously attracts international interest. This course investigates trends and developments in contemporary German culture and society from a cross-cultural perspective, taking into consideration the historical events of different generations in Germany. Students will be encouraged to compare and critically analyze the reflections about Germany and their own society. The course content will be presented by up-to-date audiovisual materials. No knowledge of German is required.

Learning Outcomes

The aim of this course is to let students explore different aspects of German culture and society and make them think about the source of behavior, customs and attitudes, while comparing with Hong Kong and Chinese behavior. The famous German poet Goethe included in his concept of culture clothing and food, history and philosophy, art and science, children's games and sayings, climate and landscapes, economy and literature, political and private life. Although the course cannot cover all aspects, it will give students an idea about German mentality and ways of thinking and refer them back to their own background. One needs to be aware of one's own background to discover the identity of the other. After taking this course, students are expected to have an understanding of Germany in regards to:

- (1) The perception of Germany & Germans (at home & abroad)
- (2) Geography (physical & political)
- (3) Holidays & Festivals (secular vs religious background)
- (4) Leisure life (daily after work & vacation)
- (5) Education (primary ~ post secondary; academic & vocational)
- (6) History (modern history with focus on 20th century)
- (7) Women's status in society

Course Content (subject to change)

Topics		
1	Perception	- Stereotypes - cross-cultural differences - dos and don'ts in Germany vs HK / China
2	Geography	- geographical properties and landscapes of Germany, Austria and Switzerland - federal states and major cities and landmarks
3	Holidays, Customs & Festivals	- major religious and secular and festivals observed - spread of certain holiday customs to countries abroad
4	Leisure Life	- after-work and holiday activities - travel habits of Germans
5	Education System	part 1: from pre-school to secondary education - part 2: post-secondary education: vocational training & universities
6	History	- part 1: Medieval times to the German Empire under the emperor Wilhelm I (end of 19th century); 20th century history: WWI & WWII

		- part 2: rebuilding Germany after WWII; split & re-unification of East and West Germany German National Anthem: History and particularities compared to other countries' anthems
7	Resistance to the Nazi Rule	Resistance Movements to Oppression by the National Socialists (Nazis)
8	Women in German Society	opportunities and status of women in German society - equal rights for all - famous German women in sports, entertainment and politics

Learning Activities

Interactive classwork [1] (hr/day) in / out class		Extra-curricular activities (hr/course) in / out class		Web-based teaching (hr/day) in / out class		Homework / Self-study (hr/day) in / out class	
3			0		0.5		3
M			0		M		M

M = Mandatory / O = Optional

[1] Interactive classwork focuses on student-centered activities as pair work, group work, role-playing and student-teacher interaction.

Assessment Scheme

Task nature	Description	Weight
Participation and oral expression	Participation includes preparing for class, arriving on time, attending lessons and making active contributions during class.	10%
Presentation	Students present a chosen topic individually or in groups of two or three students. A list of available topics is provided below, and students may also suggest their own topics. A draft of the presentation must be submitted 1 week in advance.	30%
Written assignment	Assignment on a topic discussed in class.	30%
Final Exam	On topics discussed in class.	30%

Notes: You are required to arrive on time.

You are required to attend at least 75% of the class. Treat 75% attendance as the minimum, not the maximum.

The success of your own learning will highly depend on your attendance.

Should you miss more than 25% of the class, you will automatically fail the course.

Unauthorised absence from any assessment will result in grade F for that assessment.

If you are unable to attend, get informed about what content and homework you missed and make it up yourself.

Grade descriptors

	A	B	C	D	F
General	Outstanding performance in all learning outcomes and meeting all specified assessment requirements.	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, or high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.	Barely satisfactory performance in a number of learning outcomes.	Unsatisfactory performance in a number of learning outcomes and/or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Learning Resources

Course Reading

- Information provided by the German Government: <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de>
- Bernstein, Eckhard: Culture and Customs of Germany. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2004.
- Lewis, Derek: Contemporary Germany. A Handbook. London: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Fraser, Catherine C, Hoffmann, Dierk O. Pop Culture Germany! Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006
- Please refer to the Moodle site for GERM1100 for further material.

Course website: Moodle@Keep

<https://moodle.keep.edu.hk/>

Suggested Topics for Student Presentation

Technical developments in Germany (e.g., German Cars); Energiewende Deutschland (energy transition in Germany, from coal to wind etc); Fine Arts in Germany (e.g. expressionism; contemporary media artists, the Biennale in Berlin, etc) ; Music in German speaking countries (Germany & Austria): Classical / Modern / Pop / Techno, etc.; Religion in Germany; German design and architecture; The Berlin Wall; Tourism in Germany (e.g., German Fairy Tale Route; Castles on the River Rhine; etc.); History (e.g., King Ludwig II of Bavaria and his 'Disney' castles; the Iron Chancellor: Otto von Bismarck, etc); the social security net in Germany; German theatre; German media; German philosophy; German cinema (e.g. Neuer Deutscher Film; film schools in Germany, etc); Germany in the European Union; Museums in Germany (e.g. Berlin, Munich, etc); Flüchtlingskrise 2015 (refugee crisis); Abgasskandal (Dieselaffäre – and many more.

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

Schedule (Subject to change):

Week	Date	Remarks	Content
1	Sep 4-10	Sep 4 (Mon) Inauguration Ceremony for Undergraduates (classes suspended until 1:30pm)	1 Perception of Germany (pt 1): Common Stereotypes
2	Sep 11-17	Online add-drop 11-17 Sept (Mon-Sun)	1 Perception of Germany (pt 2): "Culture Shock"
3	Sep 18-24	Department add drop 18-22 Sept (Mon-Fri) (exceptional cases only)	2 Geography of German speaking countries Reading: Geography, Population, Language
4	Sep 25-Oct 1	Public Holiday: Sep 30 (Sat) – The day following the Chinese Mid-Autumn Festival	3 Holidays, Customs & Festivals (pt 1) Student Presentation Reading: Holidays, Customs, Leisure
5	Oct 2-8	Oct 2 (Mon) Public holiday – The day following National Day	3 Holidays, Customs & Festivals (pt 2) Student Presentation Reading: Holidays, Customs, Leisure
6	Oct 9-15		4 Holidays, Customs & Festivals (pt 2) Student Presentation Reading: as above
7	Oct 16-22	Oct 21 (Sat) Information Day for Undergraduate Admissions (all classes suspended)	5 Education System (pt 1): Primary & Secondary Student Presentation Reading: Structures of Education
8	Oct 23-29	Oct 23 (Mon) Public holiday – Chung Yeung Festival	5 Education System (pt 2): Post-Secondary; Universities; Vocational Education Student Presentation, Reading: as above
9	Oct 30-Nov 5		6 History (pt 1): Early History ~ WWII Student Presentation Reading: Modern German History

10	Nov 6-12	Nov 9 (Thu) 92nd Congregation (all classes suspended)	6 History (part 2): Post- WWII: Two German States & Reunification; National Anthem Student Presentation, Reading: as above
11	Nov 13-19		7 Resistance Movements to Oppression by the National Socialists (Nazis) Student Presentation Reading: German Resistance
12	Nov 20-26		8 Women in German Society Student Presentation Reading: Women, Marriage and Education
13	Nov 27-Dec 2		Final Test
	Dec 5		Submission of Reflection Paper

Class section and Lecturers' contact details:

Class	Time	Classroom	Week	Teacher	Email
GERM2100	Tu 10:30-13:15	ARC G02	13	Ms. Annette Frömel	annettefromel@cuhk.edu.hk

General Contacts:

Contact	Telephone	Email	Office
Coordinator	39437699	annettefromel@cuhk.edu.hk	G31, Leung Kau Kui Building
General Office	3943 9836	lin@cuhk.edu.hk	G17, Leung Kau Kui Building Office Hours: Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 1:00pm, 2:00pm to 5:30pm Friday: 8:45am to 1:00pm, 2:00pm to 5:45pm

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

Feedback for Evaluation

Our language programme highly values students' feedback and comments and is happy to use them for reflection on our teaching and improvement. Students are very welcome to provide comments and feedback on the course any time to their course teacher or the course level coordinator through email or in personal conversation. In addition, students' feedbacks will be collected in the middle of the term through an open-end questionnaire and the teacher will discuss the feedbacks in class and make improvements if necessary. The course will also follow the university's course evaluation exercise at the end of the term, and students' feedbacks will be used for future course planning and teaching.