Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Term 1 2026-2027

Course Code & Title:	**GERM2200** **German Cinema 德國電影**	
Language of Instruction:	English	**Units**: 3

Course Description
German cinema has always captured the attention of the world. This course is an introduction to the history and major developments in German cinema. It explores the language of cinema and the aesthetic strategies used by filmmakers. Through analyses and discussions about the making and content of the films, students will not only get to know the films as entertaining art, but embed them in a social and historical context. Films are screened outside class hours. All films are with English subtitles, all readings and discussions in English. No knowledge of German is required. 德國電影一直以來都吸引著世界的目光。本科向學生介紹德國電影的歷史和主要發展，並探討電影的語言和電影製片人使用的美學策略。 通過對電影的製作和內容的分析及討論，學生不僅將電影作為一門娛樂藝術去理解，而且會將它們放到社會和歷史背景下去理解。 本科討論的電影將於課外時間播放，並配有英語字幕。閱讀材料及課堂討論均為英語。修讀本科的學生無須懂德語。

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of the course, students can: • analyze key works of German cinema since the 1990s • explore the relationship between film and culture/history. • talk about differences and similarities between film and one's own perception of culture • analyze several aesthetic and cultural concepts related to film. • analyze film scenes using tools learned during the course.

Course Syllabus

Week	Movie	Film language	Culture/ History
Week 1		Film language: Introduction	German Cinema: Introduction
Week 2	**All Quiet on the Western Front** Original: Im Westen nichts Neues Year: 2022 Director: Edward Berger	Camera Sound	"All Quiet on the Western Front" is a powerful anti-war film that portrays the brutal reality and futility of war through the eyes of young German soldiers during World War I. The First World War (1914-1918) The Weimar Republic (1918-1933)

Week 3	**All Quiet on the Western Front**	Character analysis Mise-en-scène	Historical Legacy of World War I German Society during World War I Youth and War Veterans' Experiences
Week 4	**Good Bye Lenin**! Year: 2003 Director: Wolfgang Becker	Opening credits	A comedy film about a boy who keeps the life of his mother firmly rooted in a world that no longer exists for the sake of her health. A lighter film set in the rapidly changing world. Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall German reunification
Week 5	**Good Bye Lenin**!	Symbols and motifs	Society in East and West Germany Loss of GDR culture Daily life in the GDR
Week 6	**The Baader Meinhof Complex** Original: Der Baader Meinhof Komplex Year: 2008 Director: Uli Edel	Editing	A gripping portrayal of the rise and fall of the Red Army Faction, exploring the tumultuous political landscape of Germany in the 1970s. The Red Army Faction Left-wing terrorism
Week 7	**The Baader Meinhof Complex**	Camera Sound	The ‘68 generation Student movement
Week 8	**The Lives of Others** Original: Das Leben der anderen Year: 2006 Director: Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck	Opening Scene Character Analysis	“Lives of Others” is one of the most powerful films depicting the dystopian invasion of personal privacy and political murder committed by the East German regime. The GDR regime Stasi: The secret police of GDR
Week 9	**The Lives of Others**	Mise-en-scène Set & costumes Sound	The Stasi Record Agency Surveillance and privacy protection

Week 10	**Downfall** Original: Der Untergang Year: 2004 Director: Oliver Hirschbiegel	Script	Downfall" is a film depicting the last days of the Nazi party. It is a critically acclaimed movie that gives a personal look into the face of evil. National socialism The National Socialist Regime (1933-1945)
Week 11	**Downfall**	Mise-en-scene	Right-wing extremism
Week 12	**Head-On** Original: Gegen die Wand Year: 2004 Director: Fatih Akin	Cinematography Editing	The film is a poignant exploration of love and identity, following the intense relationship between two Turkish-German individuals seeking to escape their cultural constraints Identity Love
Week 13	**Head-On**	Sound Design Symbolism	Societal Conflicts Self-Discovery

Course Components
Teaching Mode
On-site face-to-face interactive classwork: 100%

Learning Activities							
Interactive classwork[1] (hr/day)		Extra-curricular activities (hr/course)		Web-based teaching (hr/day)		Homework / Self-study (hr/day)	
in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class	in /	out class
3			2		0.5		3
M			O		M		M

M = Mandatory / O = Optional

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

Assessment Type		
Task nature	**Description**	**Percentage**
Participation	Participation includes: watching the movies outside class, preparing for class, arriving on time, attending lessons and making active contributions during class.	15%
Homework Preparation	The assigned tasks (Moodle and/or worksheets) will acquaint you with the language of film, the critical, historical, theoretical and methodological aspects of film. Completing the tasks before class will develop better analytical viewing and discussion skills.	15%
Film Journal	The film journal contains tasks which provide a basis for reflection and evaluation of yourself, of the learning contents as well as of the learning experiences. It allows a self-assessment regarding the achievement of the learning objectives.	35%
Group presentation project	Presenting a specific topic by incorporating a discussion of a chosen film of our syllabus, either through close formal analysis of one-two scenes, or an informed (!) discussion of medium-specificity (production, structure, content). Leading class discussion after the presentation.	35%

- Students are required to arrive on time.
- Students are required to attend at least 75% of the class. Treat 75% attendance as the minimum, not the maximum.
- **Should a student miss more than 25% of the class, he/she will automatically fail the course.**
- If a student is unable to attend, he/she should review the content and homework that are missed and make them up him/her-self.
- **For missed tests, make-up tests will not be arranged unless the student can provide an official supporting document, such as a medical certificate.**

Learning Resources
Recommended Readings & Library Resources:
• Brockmann, Stephen, A Critical History of German Film (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2nd ed. 2020) • Barsam, Richard and Dave Monahan, Looking at Movies (New York, London: Norton Publishing, 5th ed. 2016) • Bordwell, David and Kristin Thompson. Film Art. An Introduction. (New York: McGraw Hill, 11th ed. 2016) • Clarke, David (ed.), *German Cinema since Unification* (London: Continuum, 2006) • Cooke, Paul and Chris Homewood, New Directions in German Cinema (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011) • Hake, Sabine, German National Cinema (London: Routledge, 2008). • Reimer, Robert and Reinhard Zachau, German Culture through Film (Focus Publishing/R Pullins & Co, 2nd ed. 2017)
Course website: Moodle@Keep
https://moodle.keep.edu.hk/ Announcements over the Blackboard site GERM0000
Online resources:
• German-Films: http://www.german-films.de/ • Goethe-Institut: https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/flm.html • Filmportal: https://www.filmportal.de/en • Berlinale: https://www.berlinale.de/

Assessment Rubrics					
General Grade descriptors					
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**F**
General	Outstanding performance in all learning outcomes and meeting all specified assessment requirements. The student demonstrates relevant, comprehensive and in-depth knowledge and understanding of the elements of film, using a range of subject terminology aptly. The student demonstrates detailed knowledge and understanding of the history, contexts and technology of film production. The student produces perceptive analysis and critical evaluation of films (or screenplays) seen and made. The student applies thorough knowledge and understanding of the elements of film skillfully and effectively to produce convincing film or screenplay extracts.	Good performance in all learning outcomes. The student demonstrates mostly accurate and appropriate knowledge and understanding of the elements of film, using some subject terminology appropriately. The student demonstrates some appropriate knowledge and understanding of the history, contexts and technology of film production. The student produces coherent analysis and some credible evaluation of films (or screenplays) seen and made. The student applies mostly appropriately knowledge and understanding of the elements of film competently and coherently to produce effective film or screenplay extracts.	Satisfactory performance in the majority of learning outcomes. The student demonstrates basic awareness of the elements of film, using everyday language. The student demonstrates some basic knowledge of the contexts of film production. The student describes and comments simply on films (or screenplays) seen and made. The student applies basic knowledge and understanding of some elements of film to produce simple film or screenplay extracts.	Barely satisfactory performance in a number of learning outcomes. The student rarely demonstrates basic awareness of the elements of film, using everyday language. The student rarely demonstrates some basic knowledge of the contexts of film production. The student describes and comments very simply on films (or screenplays) seen and made. The student rarely applies basic knowledge and understanding of some elements of film to produce simple film or screenplay extracts.	Unsatisfactory performance in a number of learning outcomes and/or failure to meet specified assessment requirements. The student cannot demonstrate awareness of the elements of film, using everyday language. The student cannot demonstrate knowledge of the contexts of film production. The student cannot describe and comment on films (or screenplays) seen and made. The student cannot apply knowledge and understanding of elements of film to produce film or screenplay extracts.

Course Schedule (Subject to change):

Week	Date	Remarks	Assessments	Content
1	Sep 7-13	Sep 7 (Mon) Inauguration Ceremony for Undergraduates (classes suspended until 1:30pm)		German Cinema: Introduction
2	Sep 14-20	E-add/drop on CUSIS 14-20 Sept (Mon-Sun)		Film: Im Westen nichts Neues
3	Sep 21-27	Special add/drop at department 21-25 Sept (Mon-Fri)		
4	Sep 28 - Oct 4	Oct 1 (Thu) Public holiday – National Day	Group presentation project	Film: Good Bye Lenin
5	Oct 5-11			
6	Oct 12-18	Oct 8 (Thu) German Night		
7	Oct 19-25	Oct 19 (Mo) Public holiday - The day following Chung Yeung Festival	Group presentation project	Film: Der Baader Meinhof Komplex
8	Oct 26 - Nov 1			
9	Nov 2-9		Group presentation project	Film: Das Leben der anderen
10	Nov 9-15	Nov 12 (Thu) 97th Congregation (all classes suspended)		
11	Nov 16-22	Nov 16 - Nov 27 Course registration for second term	Group presentation project	Film: Der Untergang
12	Nov 23-29	Nov 25 (Wed): German Christmas Night		
13	Nov 30 – Dec 6		Group presentation project	Film: Gegen die Wand

Class sections and teachers' contact details:

Class	Time	Classroom	Teacher	Email
GERM2200	14:30 – 17:15	WMY 304	Mr. Alexander Markus KLING	alexander.kling@cuhk.edu.hk

For further information and inquiries you are welcome to contact the Course Coordinator:

Contact	Telephone	Email	Office
Mr. Alexander Markus KLING	3943 3219	alexander.kling@cuhk.edu.hk	Room G33, Leung Kau Kui Building
General Office	3943 9836	lin@cuhk.edu.hk	Rm G17, Leung Kau Kui Building Office Hours: Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:30pm Friday: 8:45am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:45pm

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 at 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-ended 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.

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.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- 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.
- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.
- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments and examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students

may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g. Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials to a third-party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

All use of AI tools is prohibited in assignments and assessment tasks

For assignments and assessment tasks that count towards the final course grades, students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT)*.

Any breach of the regulations will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's *Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty.*

In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher

For more information about our French programme, please join us on Instagram!

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