University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

GERMAN-333: Text and Contexts, Fall 2019
M/W 12:30-1:45; Lapham Hall 253

Course instructor & email: Dr. Karolina May-Chu (maychu@uwm.edu)
Office, phone: Curtin Hall 894, (414) 229 4547
Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on diverse aspects of German society and culture today. You will gain a better understanding of contemporary Germany and some of the major issues that are being discussed. We will read, discuss, and analyze sample texts from a wide range of literary and non-literary genres (e.g. poetry slam, advertisement, news report, short story, song, graphic novel, novel, film) and examine their larger contexts. You will develop your critical thinking, learn the skills of textual analysis, familiarize yourself with important terms to speak about texts in a sophisticated manner, and advance your general proficiency in German. For each major text, you will generate a vocabulary list and a semantic map, and you will complete written assignments.

Prerequisites: German 331 or German 332. The language of instruction is German.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of this course, you will:
• have a deeper understanding of Germany today
• be aware of different reading strategies and be accustomed to using them
• be attuned to different genres and be able to identify the target audience, register, and the formal and stylistic features of a text
• have expanded your vocabulary and know how to develop your own vocabulary lists and maps
• be able to discuss and compare texts using the appropriate terms and expressions
• be more attuned to specific aspects of German style and grammar

REQUIRED MATERIALS
• Shorter course readings, excerpts, and worksheets will be posted to our Canvas site over the course of the semester. They must be printed and brought to class. Please read each text thoroughly, make notes in the text and in a separate notebook, and make sure to bring your notes to class.
• A reading journal (Leseheft). In this course you will keep a reading journal. You will use the journal for all graded and ungraded written assignments. I will collect and grade the journal three times over the course of the semester. You may either get one larger journal or three smaller ones (e.g., a 7x8.5-inch blue book with 8 sheets/16 pages should suffice). The journal will also be your space to explore and be creative with the texts and assignments, and you will be invited to decorate and illustrate your journal as much as you like. Choose the type of journal that best fits your personal style and preference.
• Thomas Brussig: Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee (ISBN: 9783596148479). Please make sure you purchase the original, full length novel in German (NOT the abbreviated “Easy Reader” version).
• A good-size dictionary, such as the New College German Dictionary (Langenscheidt). Good online dictionaries include: http://dict.leo.org or http://www.dict.cc
The use of electronic translation programs and sites (e.g., Google Translate) for phrases of more than 4 words is NOT allowed. I discourage the use of Google Translate even for individual words or expressions. Instead, you should use one of the above-mentioned dictionaries, as they give you more details on the context in which a word is used properly. Make sure to look at all options before deciding which word to use.

All work you submit must be entirely your own and completed without assistance from people who are not trained instructors in the UWM German Program or at PASS. Proper citations must be provided when using outside sources. If you need help or have any questions, please contact me first.

Not adhering to these rules will constitute an academic integrity violation and will have serious consequences (see below).

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course meets the UWM General Education Requirements (GER) in the division of the Humanities. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Identify the formation, traditions, and ideas essential to major bodies of historical, cultural, literary, or philosophical knowledge. (Criterion 1)
- Apply diverse humanistic theories or perspectives to other branches of knowledge or to issues of universal human concern. (Criterion 3)

The following University of Wisconsin System Shared Learning Goal also applies to this course:

- Intercultural Knowledge and Competence including the ability to interact and work with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures; to lead or contribute support to those who lead; and to empathize with and understand those who are different than they are. (Goal 4)

The Leseheft assignment will also measure the student's skills in critical and creative thinking, the accomplishment of which is one of the UW System's Shared Learning Goals for all students. Lesehefte will be written in German. The following criteria will be used to assess the Leseheft:

**Grading Rubric for Lesehefte**

- Content (30): critical and in-depth engagement with the text, thoughtful and cohesive response, clear argument structure, supported by evidence, demonstrates research of unfamiliar concepts or persons, where applicable
- Sophistication (20): complexity of sentences, variability in vocabulary, use of cohesive devices, word order, idiomatic expressions
- Creativity (10): creativity in language use, research, engagement with the text
- Grammar (20): verb conjugation (subject-verb agreement), use of tenses, cases and case endings
- Spelling (10): capitalization of nouns, general spelling, punctuation
- Formal Requirements (10): formal requirements listed in the assignment, including length, formatting, etc.
Expected Workload
Although the exact breakdown will vary by student, your expected time commitment for this course is approximately **147 hours**:
- This class meets twice weekly for 75 minutes, for a total of **35 hours of required lecture time**.
- You should expect to take at least **60 hours** over the course of the semester reading the required texts.
- Other homework assignments include graded reading responses (*Leseheft*), non-graded assignments, and a multimedia text portfolio. These will take about **32 hours** to complete.
- You should reserve at least **20 hours** to study vocabulary and prepare for and take the midterm exam and the final exam.

EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Preparation and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Leseheft</em> (reading response journals)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Quizzes (5x3%)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multimedia Text Portfolio</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Exams (Midterm and Final)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Grading Scale**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100-97%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90%</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>86-83%</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>82-80%</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>62-60%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59% or below</td>
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**Evaluation Details**

**A) Class Preparation and Participation** – 10%

This includes coming to class on time and with your readings printed and read and with the homework completed. It also includes meaningful participation in class, whether that be in discussion, group/partner activities or individual work.

Please do not use electronic devices in class unless you receive explicit permission from the instructor (e.g., during group work). **Texting and other activities that are not related to the class will result in a lower participation grade.** If you have a question, including about vocabulary, please ask your instructor.

Preparation for and participation in class will be evaluated using the following criteria:
- **A** = student is very well prepared, with written notes, and participates actively; student is attentive, responds when called upon and volunteers often with pertinent questions and comments.
- **B** = student is usually prepared, sometimes with written notes, and always responds when called on; volunteers on occasion.
- **C** = student shows evidence of being unprepared; has trouble when called on and does not volunteer often.
- **D-F** = student is unprepared and/or inattentive; never volunteers; comes to class late and/or leaves early; exhibits a general lack of concern for the class; student’s behavior has a negative effect on the class.

Missed test or Assignment = 0

*There will be no A+ for final grades*
B) Lesesehfe (written assignments, collected 3 times during the semester) – 40%
Over the course of the semester, you will complete a series of assignments that are related to the readings. Some assignments will ask you to provide a brief content summary or answer specific questions about the content; others will ask you to analyze a section of text, reflect on the theme of the reading, or work with the vocabulary or grammar. Assignments will be posted to Canvas. A grading rubric is available there as well. **While grammatical accuracy is important, in grading these assignments, my main focus will be on creativity, effort, and thoughtfulness.** To enhance reflection, retention of vocabulary, and to personalize your experience, you will write your assignments by hand. For each unit, you will create a section in your *Lesesehfe*. You will use the journal for graded and ungraded assignments, and you may also use it for class notes. **Please mark graded assignments clearly,** and please write legibly. I encourage you to personalize your reading journal by decorating it in any way you want – you can add drawings, charts or pictures inside, or you can decorate the outside of your *Lesesehfe*.

**Do not lose your Lesesehfe or fall behind on assignments. I will collect the Lesesehfe at the end of the second, third, and fourth unit, respectively. It will be returned to you as quickly as possible.**

If you have problems with the homework/readings, I will be happy to help you. Please talk to me after class, during my office hours, or make an appointment. As a general rule, **late homework will not be accepted, however, exceptions can be granted on a case by case basis.** Do make sure you come and talk to me about any difficulties you encounter.

C) Vocabulary Quizzes – 15%
Over the course of the semester, there will be 5 vocabulary quizzes. They will take approximately 10-15 minutes, and they will test the vocabulary that accompanies the texts we are reading and that we have discussed in class.

D) Multimedia Text Portfolio – 15%
This course is organized by thematic units and corresponding text-sets. Over the course of the semester, you will also create your own text-set that will take the form of a **multimedia text portfolio.** You will choose 5 texts from different categories, based on your personal or professional interests. A list of examples will be provided for you, but you must find at least 2 texts on your own. At the end of the semester, you will present an overview of your text-portfolio to the class. You will use SWAY to create your portfolio, which is an app that is available to you through your UWM Office365 account. Detailed instructions will be posted to our course site. **You may replace 2 texts in your portfolio by opting to create a poster to be displayed at the German Program Student Exhibit on Thursday, December 12, which we hope all students will be able to attend. Details about the poster format and the exhibit will be made available at the beginning of the semester.**

E) 2 Tests (Midterm and Final) – 20% (10% each)
There will be a midterm examination and a final examination. Both tests will include questions on the texts and the context of the readings. They will also contain a practice section in which you are asked apply your knowledge about texts using the expressions and vocabulary you have learned.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY AND TARDINESS**

Tardiness: Please be aware that tardiness is disruptive to the class. If you habitually arrive after class has started, it will have an adverse effect on your participation grade. Additionally, arriving 10-20 minutes late four times will be counted as one absence. **Arriving more than 20 minutes after class has begun is considered an absence.** If you have a legitimate reason for being late, you should *come and talk to me*, and your tardiness will be excused.
Absences: This class as well as your and your classmates’ success in this class depend on your active and regular attendance. Three absences are allowed for the semester. No differentiation is made between excused or unexcused absences. More than three absences may affect your final grade. Your final grade may decrease by one percentage point per absence after the allowed three absences. Advance notification of an absence is not required, although it is greatly appreciated. You do not need to provide a reason when you notify me of your absence. Please keep in mind that you might want to “save” your three allowed absences for an emergency.

Religious days of observation are excused, but please notify me in advance of your absence.

Please note, that if you are not in class (for whatever reason) you must still (a) turn in any assignments that are due on the day of your absence; (b) find out about assignments given on that day; (c) You are not excused from quizzes or tests given on the day of your absence. Make-up tests may be arranged at my discretion and only in cases of absence for legitimate reasons. If at all possible, you should inform me of your absence before the missed quiz or test.

While it is your responsibility to stay informed about the course, you should also remember that open and honest communication can help avoid larger problems in the future - so please do not hesitate to approach us if a problem arises!

OTHER POLICIES:

Policy on late assignments
Late assignments may receive lower grades: an assignment received within the first 24hrs after the deadline may receive a 2% deduction; 4% may be deducted for every additional 24-hour period that an assignment is late. Exception: pre-approved or approved late submissions. I strongly encourage you to communicate with me about any problems you are having. I usually work with students on helping them catch up and get on track again, if there are serious reasons beyond their control for having missed assignments.

Special accommodations
If you need special accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of the course, please contact me as soon as possible. In addition, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the requirements of this course, including what is expected of you in class, i.e., participation, homework, tests, or anything else, discuss this with me as soon as possible. Please review this syllabus thoroughly and pay attention to the requirements and assessment measures for this course.

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literature intends to comply with the UWM policy on Academic Misconduct and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities can find detailed information and assistance through the Student Accessibility Center.

The following page will provide you with a link to the Secretary of the University Web site http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf and contains the following University policies:

1. Students with disabilities
2. Religious observances
3. Students called to active military duty
4. Incompletes
5. Discriminatory conduct
6. Academic misconduct
7. Complaint procedures
8. Grade appeal procedure
Statement on Names and Gender Pronouns:**

Nouns in German have a grammatical gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter) that often doesn't obey any apparent logic: why is a pen "he," a university "she," or a girl "it"? Whereas linguists may offer different explanations for that, one thing is clear: if we want to speak German in its standard variation, we must learn the gender of nouns. The appropriate use of pronouns, possessive adjectives, adjective endings, or declensions depends on knowing the gender of a noun.

The German language also assigns humans a gender, and German is not special for having a rigid binary gender system. As a matter of fact, you will hear binary forms in most public discourse. Patriarchy, heterosexism, and gender normativity are reflected in our use of language, and language instruction is one of the spaces in which such power structures are reinforced. This does not mean that such practices cannot be contested. Feminist, queer, intersex, and trans activists in Germany have been advocating for many years for the use of gender-inclusive and non-binary language when addressing other people. Many German speakers are fighting for their right not to be erased by implicit sexist language (are all Studenten male?) or to be addressed by their preferred gender pronoun. The use of gender inclusive language is becoming more common in German. Activists are advocating forms that challenge the gender binary, for instance with the Gender-Gap (Student_innen), the Gender-Sternchen (Student*innen), and the alternative ending x (Studentxs). Still very common, but currently diminishing in usage is the use of the "Binnen-I" form with the female ending inserted into the word with a capital I (as in StudentInnen).

At UWM we strive to be respectful and inclusive. Whereas we still need to learn language in its normative form, I encourage you to be aware of the implications of such norms and to be attentive to your classmates' and instructors' desires. There is no reason why we cannot strive to make language less oppressive for all.

In this class, I ask that you refer to me as Dr. May-Chu or Professor May-Chu combined with the formal form of address (Sie). Please use feminine gender pronouns to refer to me. I address students with their first name and the non-gendered formal “Sie.” I recommend that students address each other with their first names and the informal “du.”

If you are concerned that the gendered nature of the German language may cause you any discomfort, please let me know and we can meet to talk about possible strategies/solutions. I have a class roster with your names, but please contact me should you have any preferred name and/or preferred pronoun by which you would like to be addressed. Although there are limitations to what the language allows grammatically, I am committed to finding solutions that work for all of us.

**A number of German instructors throughout the United States are working on strategies to foster more inclusive classrooms. In particular, this statement is adapted from the “Language For Life” pamphlet issued by Grinnell College and the work done by Dr. Angineh Djavadghazoryans.
 Semesterübersicht
Course schedule and content may be subject to change by the instructor. Please check your e-mail frequently for important course announcements. All homework assignments and other important details are posted to the Canvas course site.

➢ Einheit 1: Wer bin ich? Wie will ich leben?
Woche 1 (4. September)
Tag 1: Einführung in das Kursthema
Gemeinsames Kennenlernen
„Gemütlichkeit“ / Deutsch in meinem Leben

Woche 2 (9./11. September)
Tag 1: Julia Engelmann: One Day/ Reckoning Song (Poetry Slam)
Tag 2: „Bundeskanzlerin Angela Merkel buchstabiert unser Land: Was ist deutsch?“

➢ Einheit 2: Arbeit, Wissenschaft, Forschung
Woche 3 (16./18. September)
Tag 1: Heinrich Böll: „Anekdoten zur Senkung der Arbeitsmoral“
Deutschland nach dem Krieg: das Wirtschaftswunder
Vokabeltest 1
Tag 2: Deutschland als Konsumgesellschaft (Werbung)

Woche 4 (23./25. September)
Tag 1: Deutschland nach dem Krieg: Wissenschaft und Forschung
Tag 2: Die Wissenschaftlerin Lise Meitner

Woche 5 (30. September/2. Oktober)
Tag 1: Der Wissenschaftler Helmut Gröttrup
Vokabeltest 2
Tag 2: Sharon Dodua Otoo: „Herr Gröttrup setzt sich hin“ (Kurzgeschichte)
Visit poster exhibition „Shaping Germany"
Leseheft 1 abgeben

➢ Einheit 3: Identitäten
Woche 6 (7./9. Oktober)
Tag 1: Otoo: „Herr Gröttrup setzt sich hin“ (2)
Tag 2: Otoo: „Herr Gröttrup setzt sich hin“ (3)
Deutschland als Einwanderungsland

Woche 7 (14./16. Oktober)
Tag 1: Deutschland als Einwanderungsland (Gastarbeiter)
Vokabeltest 3
Tag 2: Filmdiskussion (1)
Woche 8 (21./23. Oktober)
Tag 1: Midterm Review
Tag 2: **Test 1: Midterm**

Woche 9 (28./30. Oktober)
Tag 1: Filmdiskussion (2)
Tag 2: Filmdiskussion (3)
Einführung in das Genre Graphic Novel

Woche 10 (4./6. November)
Tag 1: Birgit Weyhe: *Madgermanes* (1) (Graphic Novel)
Tag 2: Birgit Weyhe: *Madgermanes* (2)

Woche 11 (11./13. November)
Tag 1: Birgit Weyhe: *Madgermanes* (3)
**Vokabeltest 4**
**Leseheft 2 abgeben**
Tag 2: Einführung: Leben in der DDR
Thomas Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (1)

- **Einheit 4: Erwachsenwerden**

Woche 12 (18./20. November)
Tag 1: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (2)
Tag 2: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (3)
**Vokabeltest 5**

Woche 13 (26. November)
Tag 1: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (4)

- **28. November Thanksgiving**

Woche 14 (2./4. Dezember)
Tag 1: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (5)
Tag 2: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (6)

Woche 15 (9./11. Dezember)
Tag 1: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (7)
**Leseheft 3 abgeben**
Tag 2: Brussig: *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (Buch und Film)
Abschlussdiskussion

- **12. Dezember: German Program Student Exhibit**

**Final Exam: TBA**