

Hessen: IWU Kassel Course Outline

German Cultural Studies

CLASS HOURS

Lectures	35 hours (credited)
Excursions / Field Trips	10 hours (credited)

total: 45 Contact hours, 1 Contact hour = 45 min.

Academic Director: Professor Dr. Holger Ehrhardt, Endowed Chair for the Work and Impact of the Brothers Grimm at the Department for Language and Literature, University of Kassel

- Office: room 5001

- Secretary: tamara.schmidt@uni-kassel.de

- Email: holger.ehrhardt@uni-kassel.de

- Phone: +49561 804 -7455 / -3336

1) INFORMATION ON THE COURSE CONTENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Reflections on German History: Literature and Art of the 19th and 20th century

In this seminar we will take a closer look at the so-called `Goethe-Zeit`. We are going to try to understand what led to Nietzsche's dictum that Goethe himself was culture. In order to do so, we will have a look at his major works and will be introduced to Goethe's concept to bring poetry and science together within the thinking. Thus, we will analyse Goethe as a scientist, i.e. Goethe's theory of colour and the "Goethe-Elephant."

In the second part of the seminar we will focus on the second half of the 19th century, during which time Nietzsche proclaimed the superman ("Übermensch") in accordance with his central thesis of the "will to power." This thesis had a great impact on the following decades as did his diagnoses concerning a fundamental change in the hierarchy of values

which describe the Christian morality as “overcome”. Nietzsche’s type of thinking was later called “philosophy of life” and influenced many authors like Thomas Mann.

The seminar closes with a third topic: Revolutionary art movements in Germany. On a excursion to Weimar, a small town in Thuringia which had become a cultural melting pot during Goethe’s time, we will see many cultural relicts of the time and we will explore the artefacts of the revolutionary art movements in Germany, like the ‘Bauhaus’, which was founded in Weimar, and Expressionism.

Further field trips include visits of museums in the Kassel area, like the Museum of the Brothers Grimm or the Ottoneum, which was the first fixed theatre in Germany and serves as a place for exhibitions these days. Among others, it is famous for the so-called ‘Goethe Elephant’, which Goethe used for his studies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The content of this seminar is influenced and led by the areas of interest on the students’ part. The lecture will hence put special emphasis and provide background information on particular topics the students want to know more about.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Sheehan, James J.: *German history 1770 - 1866*. Oxford 1989.
- Milward, Alan & Saul, S.B.: *The economic development of continental Europe 1780 - 1870*. London 1973.
- Kitchen, Martin: *The political economy of Germany 1815 - 1914*. Montreal 1973.
- James, Howard Mumford: *Revolution and Romanticism*. Cambridge, London 1974.n.n.

Further material will be provided during the course.

2) INFORMATION ON CLASS PARTICIPATION, ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

ASSIGNMENTS

- *Presentation / paper, homework*

EXAMS

- *Written exam at the end of the course.*

PRACTICE MATERIALS

- *Will be distributed during the course.*

PROFESSIONALISM & CLASS PARTICIPATION

- *Regular participation in classes and excursions (attendance lists); active contribution to discussions is expected. Optional: a presentation or paper can be given.*

MISSED CLASSES

- *No more than 10% of the contact hours can be missed for successful completion of the class.*

3) INFORMATION ON GRADING AND ECTS

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Upon successful completion, 4 ECTS will be awarded for the class.

According to the rules of ECTS, one credit is equivalent to 25-30 hours student workload.

GRADING SCALE:

Grade		Description
15 points	1.0	<i>very good: an outstanding achievement</i>
14 points		
13 points	1.3	
12 points	1.7	
11 points	2.0	
10 points	2.3	<i>good: an achievement substantially above average requirements</i>
9 points	2.7	
8 points	3.0	
7 points	3.3	<i>satisfactory: an achievement which corresponds to average requirements</i>
6 points	3.7	
5 points	4.0	<i>sufficient: an achievement which barely meets the requirements</i>
4 points	5.0	
3 points		
2 points		
1 point		
0 points		