

GRMN 3200
Current German
Society & Culture

Tu/Th
2-3:15pm
Remote

Dr. Rosenau

she/they

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University of Colorado Denver
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Introduction and Learning Objectives

In this course you will learn about various systems in Germany as they are relevant to the country since its reunification in 1990.

To understand current German society and culture, you will first learn about major modern events, concepts, and key figures that have shaped the country. You will develop a basic grasp of topics such as politics, justice, economy, transportation, geography, education, welfare, and healthcare.

You will be introduced to the history of the EU, learn about Germany's role in the EU today, and consider how the country, under the leadership of Olaf Scholz and the new coalition, is navigating issues like global migration, climate crisis, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

GRMN 3200 includes materials that highlight a diverse and inclusive understanding of Germanophone cultures, including Black German, Turkish German, LGBTQ+ and Indigenous perspectives, among others.

You will work on two projects and develop your ability to perform research, gain and analyze data, critique newly acquired information, and learn to present your views (with analysis) both orally and in writing.

There will be class discussions, and through your participation you will learn to recognize and evaluate biases you may have toward Germany and its people. You will develop an understanding of contemporary German society and culture based on factual information and current scholarship. You will also engage in some rudimentary language learning and gain some survival skills in speaking the German language. There is no prerequisite for this course.

Materials & Expectations

Books

Jana Hensel, *After the Wall: confessions from an East-German childhood and the life that came next* (ISBN: 9781586485597)

Auraria Library Films

Throughout the semester, you will be given access to various documentaries and short films, some of which are archived and hosted by the university library.

Web Resources

- [Black Central Europe](#)
- [BGHRA](#)
- [Deutsche Welle](#)
- [Facts about Germany](#)
- [German History \(GHDI\)](#)
- [Museum of Migration](#)

Canvas

You are expected to check Canvas regularly. Here you will find readings, extra materials, discussions, project guidelines, and exams.

As a student, you are expected to come to class, be prepared, participate, be respectful of those you are in discussion with, and take responsibility for your own learning. You are expected to listen and respond respectfully to presentations and discussion comments by classmates.

Being prepared means that you have engaged meaningfully with the texts, films, music, or any other materials you were assigned before coming to class.

To engage meaningfully with the materials means that ...

- you have read/watched/listened to it
- you have thought about it on its own as well as in relation to other course materials
- you have taken notes that summarize the content of the material as well as your own thoughts on it
- you have written down any questions that arose for you while engaging with the material. It could be something you thought was particularly confusing or thought provoking.



Grading: Attendance, Homework, Projects

Attendance & Participation: You are required to attend and participate in synchronized and asynchronous class meetings. Attendance and participation counts as 35% of your final grade. Participation includes contribution to class discussions, topic reflections, and any form of academic mutual aid (i.e. collective note sharing, study meetups, helping peers access the library or navigate online platforms; students can self-report throughout the semester). Let us work together to create compassionate and respectful spaces for co-learning, and a class we all look forward to.

Racism, discrimination or hate speech of any kind will not be tolerated in our work together inside or outside of the classroom. For students wishing to become better allies to BIPOC, you can find helpful resources [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

Homework: Homework is posted daily in Canvas. Do all assigned readings and viewings and come prepared to summarize and discuss. Asynchronous discussions, culture reflections and other Canvas-embedded activities are also assigned as participation and homework for this course.

Projects: You will complete two projects for this course. Both projects will require a written as well as an oral component. **The first is a Geography Project** where you examine one of the German provinces (*Bundesland*) and present your findings to the class. **The second is a Discovery Project** where you closely examine an aspect of contemporary Germany. You will complete this project in phases. Each phase will be graded based on your submitting the assignment on time and meeting the assignment objectives. Specifically, you are expected to demonstrate that you can gather pertinent information, sort and organize that information, reflect on what you have learned, formulate thought that goes beyond mere reporting of the facts, reach a conclusion, and argue the validity of that conclusion without allowing bias or prejudice to become any substantiation of your argument.

Exams: There is a midterm and final for this course. Both are take-home, short essay exams. The essay questions are designed to test your ability at critical thinking. You will be given a topic or choice of topics and must write a reaction to the topic in which you demonstrate that you can defend a point of view based on showing contrasts and comparisons using the information you have gained in this course. You must substantiate your arguments using facts and show how you can relate the information to your personal life.

Grading

- Participation/Discussions (35%)
- Projects (35%)
 - Geography Project (15%)
 - Discovery Project (20%)
- Exams (30%)



Global Perspectives

International Perspectives Core Curriculum Course

GRMN 3200 Current German Society and Culture fulfills the International Perspectives Core Curriculum Requirement at the University of Colorado Denver.

International Perspectives Learning Outcomes in GRMN 3200

The following list contains the International Perspectives Learning Outcomes and Definitions and describes how GRMN 3200 integrates these learning outcomes into the assignments, readings and the course overall.

International Perspectives Learning Outcome	Definition	How GRMN 3200 will accomplish the Learning Outcome
Global Context	Explain the relationships and interdependencies of countries, regions, and/or non-state actors in a global context.	This course provides through its readings, lectures, discussions and assignments an understanding of contemporary German culture and society from a global context.
Methodological Approaches	Apply discipline-based approaches to analyze international issues, theories, and debates.	This course provides through its readings, lectures, discussions and assignments the application of both qualitative (i.e., using data and statistics to analyze large groups of people by dividing them into commonly identifiable categories such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion and class, among others) and quantitative approaches (engaging with individual interviews, discourse analysis and ethnography, and focusing on the lived experiences and examples of a wide variety of people residing in Germany today). These will serve as a foundation to understand and comprehend different issues that are impacting individuals, communities, and German society at large.
Cultural Identities	Explore the role that culture plays in constructing national, regional, and international identities.	This course provides through its readings, lectures, discussions and assignments how the interface between cultural factors and other political realities including migration, immigration, gender, education, economic, social and factors can impact the formation of identity development within individual and communities across regional, national and international/global contexts.
Influential Trends	Evaluate the influence of past and/or contemporary trends on global developments.	This course provides through its readings, lectures, discussions and assignments an important foundation for understanding past and present influential trends (such as the recent BLM uprisings, #AFROZENSUS, PEGIDA, migration issues, and others).

Development of Critical Thinking through Analysis and Writing in GRMN 3200

A major component of this course is supporting students in their development of critical thinking ability. Through different assignments students will develop critical thinking skills relevant to the field German Studies.

Through the Geography Project, Discovery Project, and other assignments, students will be able to critically analyze the impact of global factors on the development of unified Germany (1990), as well as global factors and trends that shape contemporary German culture and society today. Important feedback will be provided by the instructor to give the student an opportunity to critically think about the issues being researched and how to improve their work.

Course Schedule

Week	Day	Topics	Readings and Assignments (to be done by class this day)
Week 1	Jan. 18	Introductions	
	Jan. 20	Borders & Geography	* Read: Fulbrook, Ch 7: "The Two Germanies, 1945-1990," pp 205-20
Week 2	Jan. 25	Borders & Geography	* Read: Fulbrook, Ch 7: "The Two Germanies, 1945-1990." pp 220-35
	Jan. 27	Borders & Geography	* Read: Fulbrook, Ch 7: "The Two Germanies, 1945-1990." pp 235-49
Week 3	Feb. 1	The German State after WWII (Guilt, De-Nazification, & Reconstruction)	* Watch: The Nuremburg Trials (50 min) * Read: The Principles of International Law * Read: The definition of genocide in Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
	Feb. 3	German Topography & States	* Geography Assignment: find your state (Bundesland)
Week 4	Feb. 8	Intro to the German Language	
	Feb. 10	Zero Hour	* Skim these definitions (5-10 min tops): • Stunde Null • Trümmerliteratur * Explore Material Culture: • Berlin 1945 (3 min) * Listen to the podcast episode: Mr. Bliss (35 min)
Week 5	Feb. 15	European Integration/ History of UN & EU	* Before-Class Activity on Canvas
	Feb. 17	Germany's Guest Worker Program	* Read: "Germany in Transit: Working Guests" * Listen to Guest-Worker Music * Asynchronous Discussion on Canvas
Week 6	Feb. 22	Student Geography Reports	* Presentations for Geography Assignment
	Feb. 24	Student Geography Reports	* Presentations for Geography Assignment * Written Geography Reports Due!
Week 7	March 1	The Berlin Wall	* Asynchronous Discussion on Canvas Midterm Exam Available (due on or before March 15)
	March 3	The Fall of the Wall and (Re)Unification	* Read: Jana Hensel, <i>After the Wall</i> (pp. 1-62)
Week 8	March 8	The Fall of the Wall and (Re)Unification	* Read: Jana Hensel, <i>After the Wall</i> (pp. 63-119)
	March 10	The Fall of the Wall and (Re)Unification	* Finish reading: Jana Hensel, <i>After the Wall</i> (pp. 121-166)
Week 9	March 15	German 'unity' DDR Museum	* Read: May Ayim's Poem about German "unity" * Midterm Exam Due
	March 17	Culture Reflection Activities	* Confirm Discovery Project Topics

Course Schedule Cont.

Week	Day	Topics	Readings and Assignments (to be done by class this day)
Week 10	March 29	United Germany: Parliamentary System & Political Parties	
	March 31	New Coalition/ Germany's Role in the EU/ History of Greens	* Read: New Federal Government (15 min)
Week 11	April 5	Welfare & Healthcare	* Read: COVID-19 Vaccine: An Immigrant Story (5 min) * Read: Welfare in Germany (5 min) * List of Sources for Discovery Project Due
	April 7	Jews in Germany Today	* Read: Jews in Germany essays (3 essays, 30 min)
Week 12	April 12	Immigrants, Race, and Religion in Contemporary Germany	* Watch: The European Refugee Crisis Explained (6 min) * Read: the definition of PEGIDA (3 min) * Optional/Explore: Stories of Migrants and Refugees
	April 14	Education Systems: Primary & University	* Explore: The German School System
Week 13	April 19	Transportation Systems	* Read: " How Berlin is Reckoning with its Colonial Past " (20 min) * Watch/listen to the music video: Matondo (4 min) * Outline of Topics for Discovery Project Due (by 2pm)
	April 21	Black Germans/Afro-deutsche, Decolonization & BLM	* Watch: Black German Voices #BLM #AfroZensus (6 min) * Canvas Activities
Week 14	April 26	Reading Day	Final Exam Available (due on or before May 12)
	April 28	Student Discovery Reports	* Presentations for Discovery Projects
Week 15	May 3	Student Discovery Reports	* Presentations for Discovery Projects * Written Discovery Project Due
	May 5	Student Discovery Reports	* Presentations for Discovery Projects
FINALS WEEK	May 9-13		* Final Exam Due on or before May 12

The Fine Print

As an instructor, I am expected to come to class, to be respectful, to be prepared, to provide you with interesting materials, to facilitate meaningful discussions, to challenge you and push you beyond your comfort zone, and to support you as you learn and as you progress in your studies. I am a supporter of LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC. My classroom and office are SAFE ZONES—if I make a mistake in class, please feel free to reach out to me afterward so I can continue to learn and be a better ally. Please keep the lines of communication open. Inform me as soon as possible if you are struggling to keep up in class: during or after class, during office hours, via email or video call – no matter which form, communication is key!

Academic Integrity

Our Department expects students who enroll in our courses to demonstrate the highest degree of academic integrity. Please respect CU Denver behavior and honor codes in this class. We are obligated to report all suspected cases of academic misconduct to the Department Chair. Please be informed about CU Denver's [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Please see resources for student support [HERE](#).

Accommodations for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodations letter from Disability Resources and Services to your instructor in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Resources and Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Resources and Services](#) website. Contact Disabilities Services at (303) 315-3510 or by e-mail at disabilityresources@ucdenver.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, discuss your needs with me.

