HISTORY 333

20th-Century German Culture and Politics

History 333 covers the central role of Germany in the modern world, including its politics and culture!

Not only was Germany at the center of the First World War, the rise of Totalitarianism, the Second World War, the Holocaust, and the Cold War--German writers, artists, composers and filmmakers responded to all of these developments by constructing modernist responses to modernity.

Great literature, art, music, and films provide the best way to feel the impact of 20th century history, and this blended course will raise your understanding of all these.

Taking advantage of many of the new technologies available to educators today, this course involves independent study of online lectures and course materials (allowing you to go through them on your own time, at your own pace), combined with individual and in class discussion of these materials with Professor Dennis.

As a result, this course will constitute a rich synthesis of learning methods: full video lectures and, essentially, an "honors" discussion section with the professor. This is an exciting and effective model for integrating online and in-class teaching of History and other fields.
COURSE PROCEDURE FOR BLENDED COURSE

Online Lectures
Through the week, according to the course schedule, you will be asked to watch and listen to recorded lectures, in the form of videos that cover key visual, literary, and musical examples. You will be able to watch and study these lectures on your own time, when and wherever you wish. You will also be able to stop, repeat, and review the lectures as you require, allowing you to take much clearer notes and incorporate that information into your study of the course materials.

Online Forum Participation:
After watching the Video Lectures and completing the quiz, you are required to post questions and comments based on your study of these materials on the Course Unit Forum in the Sakai site. These posts will be the basis for your MAIN GRADE, the online Forum Contribution Grade.

Discussion Sections
Given that you will have experienced and studied the course lectures online, on your own schedule, we will be able to use class meeting times in order to more freely explore related issues, answer questions, discuss further materials, and generally fine tune what you have learned via the lecture videos. You will have made your Forum entries by this time, so I will take that feedback into account in preparing these sections, concentrating on questions or issues that you have raised.

Optional Take Home Exams
The Midterm and Final Exams (Papers) are OPTIONAL—each counting as up to a potential of 4 points of “extra credit” on your overall grade.

Extra Credit Cultural Activities
Chicago institutions consistently include German cultural events related to our course. See the Reader or similar arts and culture listings for ideas. Extra-credit can be earned with proof of attendance and a brief essay explaining in a couple of paragraphs how the experience related to our work.
COURSE UNITS

Lecture Videos may be previewed at:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWgB2EUcAT5xLa2jnKkicd_Hvx4aG8El4

UNITS 01-03 Introduction - 18th and 19th Century German Background [1770-1900]

Here are some of the creative geniuses you will learn to know and appreciate, along with German historical events. How many can you identify already?
UNITS 07-09  WWI and Erich Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front [1914-18]
UNITS 10-12: Weimar Culture and Politics - Alfred Doeblin, Berlin Alexanderplatz [1918-33]
UNITS 13-17: Nazism-The Third Reich-Hitler, Mein Kampf [1918-33]
UNITS 18-19: The Holocaust-Primo Levi, Survival in Auschwitz [1933-45]
UNITS 20-21: West Germany [BRD] and Rainer Fassbinder, Marriage of Maria Braun [1945-1989]
UNIT 23: Die Wende (The Transition) 1989-90

ODE TO FREEDOM

BERNSTEIN IN BERLIN

Beethoven • Symphony No. 9
SAMPLE VIDEOS AND UNITS:

**VIDEO 02  18th and 19th Century German Background**

**IMAGES**
- Classicism.htm
- Storm & Stress.htm
- Romanticism.htm
- Biedermeier.htm
- Realism.htm
- Impressionism.htm
- Gruenderzeit.htm
- Volkish.htm
- Symbolism.htm
- Secession.htm
- Expressionism.htm
- Abstraction.htm
PRIMARY SOURCES COVERED
Heinrich Mann, *The Subject (Der Untertan)*

MAIN THEMES
Search for Authority
Search for Community/Unity
Anti-Semitism
Rejection of Modernity
Militarization of Society/Culture
Cult of the Emperor
Liberal/Socialist Critique or Opposition
Anti-Liberalism/Socialism
“Romantic” National Culture
War Enthusiasm
PRIMARY SOURCES COVERED
Erich Maria Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front
Ernst Friedrich, Krieg dem Kriege [War Against War]
  Ernst Juenger, Storms of Steel (text)
MAIN THEMES
War Enthusiasm/Volunteerism
  Value of Front Experience
  Camaraderie
  Leadership Principle
  Militarization of Society/Culture
Impact of Technological Warfare
  Mass Death
Brutalization of Culture/Society
  Dehumanization of Individual
Front vs. Command and Home
  Lost Generation
VIDEO 10 Weimar Culture

PRIMARY SOURCES COVERED
Alfred Doeblin, Berlin Alexanderplatz

MAIN THEMES
Modernist Expression/Technique
  Impact of WWI
  Brutalization of Society
  Brutalization of Politics
  Isolation/Alienation of Individual
  Popular Culture
  Urbanization
  Crime
  Decadence
Weimar Economy/Unemployment
  Anti-Semitism
  Critique of Republic
  Political Disunity/Apathy
  Search for Order
PRIMARY SOURCES COVERED
Hitler, Mein Kampf
Triumph of the Will

MAIN THEMES
Anti-Modernity (Urbanism/Industrialization)
Anti-Modernism (Cultural)
Racial Anti-Semitism
Leader Principle
Search for Order
Search for Unification/Community
Brutality of Politics
Dehumanization of Enemies
Impact of First World War
Emotionalism/Anti-Intellectualism
Neo-Classical Aesthetics
Invocation of Romantic Political Culture
PRIMARY SOURCES COVERED
Primo Levi, Survival in Auschwitz

Musical response: Schoenberg__A_Survivor_From_Warsaw__op___46.mp3

MAIN THEMES
Racial Anti-Semitism
Bureaucracy/Process of “Jewish Policy”
Dehumanization of Jews
Complicity of Victims
Banality of Evil
Existentialist Themes
Limits of Language
Moral Relativism (“Gray Zone”)
Existence precedes Essence
Atomization/Selfishness
Hopelessness
Loss of Tradition/Faith
VIDEO 20 West Germany [BRD] and Fassbinder, Marriage of Maria Braun, Introduction
Watch or listen to this before watching film.

FILM COVERED
Rainer Fassbinder, The Marriage of Maria Braun

MAIN THEMES
Conditions at “Zero Hour”
Rejection/Indifference to Traditional Culture
Capitalism/Anti-Labor
Materialism/Greed
Atomization/Selfishness
Post-War Political Leadership
German-American Relations
Women in Post-War German Society
Post-War Leftist Criticism (“The Third Way”)
VIDEO 22 East Germany (DDR) and The Lives of Others Intro

FILM COVERED
Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, The Lives of Others

MAIN THEMES
Economic Conditions in the DDR
Marxist-Leninist Ideology in the DDR
“Totalitarian” Culture in the DDR
Political Repression/Terror in the DDR
“Stasi” Surveillance Techniques
Economic/Professional “Terror” in the DDR