

Name: Dr. Dirk Verheyen

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Course title: Exploring Contemporary Germany and Berlin

Track: B-Track

Language of instruction: English

Contact hours: 72 (6 per day)

ECTS-Credits: 6

Course description

The demise of the Berlin Wall in 1989, Germany's reunification in October 1990, and the federal parliament's decision in June 1991 to make Berlin not only the country's capital but also home of its national government, have triggered major changes in Berlin's political, economic, social, and cultural life. In no other European city do "east" and "west" encounter one another so vividly and dramatically as in the old/new German capital.

The main objective of this course is to explore contemporary Germany with particular emphasis on the old, recent, contemporary, and future Berlin with all its diversity and richness as a major European metropolitan area, within a broader German or at times comparative European perspective. Students completing this course will leave with a deeper appreciation of the complexities characterizing Berlin's urban life and history as well as Germany's overall reunification experience.

The course will consist of a series of lectures, group discussions, student presentations, and local excursions to sites of interest.

Student profile

This course should be of particular interest to students with majors in political science, urban studies, and history. Both graduate and undergraduate students are welcome. Students who have had some course work on modern history, modern Europe, or Germany may find themselves at a small advantage in digesting the material covered in this course. There is no upper age limit, as far as participating students are concerned. Students should be able to participate in the various field-trips, some of which require more extended walks through the city than others.

Prerequisites

none

Course Requirements

Paper, Final Exam, Attendance/ active Participation.

Grading

Paper 40%, Final Exam 40%, Attendance/active Participation 20%

Literature

A course reader will be provided at the orientation meeting.

Course schedule

Date	Program
Tuesday, June 1, 2010	Introduction: Making Sense of Berlin and Germany Field-trip: Guided Tour of Berlin's Old Center
Friday, June 4, 2010	Looking Back I: The Evolution of Germany until 1990 Field-trip: German Historical Museum
Tuesday, June 8, 2010	Looking Back II: The Evolution of Berlin until 1945 Field-trip: Märkisches Museum & City Planning Models
Friday, June 11, 2010	Tense Years: Berlin's Cold War Legacy Field-trip: Soviet Memorial in Treptow & Allied Museum
Tuesday, June 15, 2010	Reunified Germany: National Challenges & Issues Field-trip: Former Headquarters of the GDR's Secret Police (Stasi)
Friday, June 18, 2010	Reunified Berlin: Growing Back Together and Planning the Capital City Field-trip: Exploration of embassy area or Tour at Chancellor's Office
Tuesday, June 22, 2010	Aspects of Society I: Contemporary Germany Field-trip: Exploring Kreuzberg, incl. a visit to a local mosque/muslim community center
Friday, June 25, 2010	Aspects of Society II: Contemporary Berlin Field-trip: Tradition, gentrification, counter-culture -- walking the area around the Oranienburger Strasse and Hackische Höfe
Tuesday, June 29, 2010	Understanding Germany's and Berlin's Politics Field-trip: Exhibition on German Political History at the Deutscher Dom
Friday, July 2, 2010	Culture in Contemporary Germany and Berlin Field-trip: Kulturforum (incl. guided tour at Philharmonie)
Tuesday, July 6, 2010	A Final Look at the Past: The Legacy of the Berlin Wall; Student Presentations Field-trip: Guided tour of sites associated with the Berlin Wall
Friday, July 9, 2010	Final Exam (morning)