

German 321
Fall Semester 2019
Contemporary German Society and Culture
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Office Hours: M 10-11; R 11-12;
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and by appointment

Course Objective

This course is designed to impart a core knowledge of contemporary German culture and society while developing further your skills in reading, writing, and speaking the German language. Emphasis will be placed on the B1 level of proficiency which comprises your ability to:

- understand the main points of information in conversations and texts on familiar matters relating to work, school and leisure time, etc. when clear, standard language is used;
- deal with most situations typically encountered when travelling in German-speaking countries;
- express yourself simply and coherently when talking about familiar topics and areas of personal interest;
- report on experiences and events, describe dreams, hopes and ambitions as well as make short statements and explanations; and
- live and work in Germany

Thematically, the course will start with an exploration of the geography and cultural landmarks in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, followed by a discussion of every-day topics such as family life, housing, education, and industry. The course will end with an overview of German history.

Required Texts

Wells/Rankin, Handbuch zur deutschen Grammatik (Sixth edition: 978-1-305-07884-0)
Matecki, Dreimal Deutsch Lesebuch (978-3-12-675237-4)
Matecki, Dreimal Deutsch Arbeitsbuch (978-3-12-675241-1)

Grading Policy

fractional grades after "x.44" are rounded up (e.g. 64.45 = 65)

A (90-100)	B+ (86-89)	B (80-85)	
C+ (76-79)	C (70-75)	D (66-69)	F (00-65)
Homework			10%
Class Participation			10%
Quizzes (Grammar; Vocabulary; Culture)			36%
Presentations (6)			30%
Final Exam (Friday, 13 December, 9-noon)			14%

**No Class Sessions on Monday, 2 September; Friday, 12 October;
Wednesday, 27 November; Friday, 29 November; Friday, 6 December;
Withdrawal Deadline on Friday, 25 October**

Students requiring accommodations or modifications for a disability should inform the instructor at the close of the first class meeting or as soon as possible. The instructor will refer you to the ACCESS and Accommodation Office to document your disability, determine eligibility for accommodations under the ADA/Section 504 and to request a Faculty Accommodation Form. Disability accommodations or status will not be indicated on academic transcripts. In order to receive accommodations in a class, students with sensory, learning, psychological, physical or medical disabilities must provide their instructor with a Faculty Accommodation Form to sign. Students must return the signed form to the ACCESS Coordinator. **A new form must be requested each semester.** Students with a history of a disability perceived as having a disability or with a current disability who does not wish to use academic accommodations are also strongly encouraged to register with the ACCESS and Accommodation Office and request a Faculty Accommodation Form each semester. For further information, please contact Katie Johnson, Director and ADA/504 Coordinator, at 301-2778 or visit the ACCESS and Accommodation Office website at <http://www.mercer.edu/disabilityservices>

Mental Health and Wellness: Mercer University faculty and staff recognize that mental health concerns can impact academic performance and interfere with daily life activities. Please notify your faculty member or academic advisor for academic assistance, as needed. The office of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can also provide support if you are feeling stressed, overwhelmed, anxious, depressed, lost, or are struggling with personal issues. Please call (478) 301-2862 or visit the [CAPS website](#) for more information. These services are free and confidential, and support non-traditional, graduate, and undergraduate students. The CAPS office on the Macon campus is located in Linden House (attached to the MEP Residence Hall).

As in all courses, you are expected to observe the provisions of the Mercer Honor Code. Whatever you submit must be your work. Do NOT seek help from native speakers, near-native speakers, or advanced German students. Do NOT use any translation app, but you may consult a dictionary for individual words or phrases. The composition you submit should NOT differ significantly from what you can write extemporaneously on a testing situation. If I suspect any violation of the cautions described above, I will report the case to the Honor Council.

Attendance Policy and Class Participation

I expect you to come to class each day prepared to contribute constructively, in German, to discussion. Every day I will subjectively evaluate your **class participation** based on my perception of your preparedness to contribute to discussion as well as the questions you ask after presentations. Evaluations will be made on a six-point scale ranging from "100" to "50;" failure to attend class results in the grade of "0". For example, you can earn a "100" by making truly exceptional, awe-inspiring contributions; you can earn a "75" by making an occasional remark about the topic being discussed; you earn a "50" just by showing up to class and remaining awake. The evaluations will be posted on Canvas on a weekly basis, but you can check with me at any time throughout the semester to see how I have been evaluating your participation. At the end of the semester your two lowest grades for class participation will be deleted.

Cell phones, text messengers **and** pagers must be turned off before entering the classroom. First-time violators will receive a warning; for every subsequent infraction **five** points will be deducted from the final course grade.

Homework

Homework will be assigned on a daily basis. Some homework assignments will be based on grammatical exercises found online or in Handbuch zur Deutschen Grammatik. Most will be based on exercises found in Dreimal Deutsch. Many of these will serve as preparation for in-class discussion and presentations. For this reason you need to submit all such assignments electronically an hour and a half before class begins (i.e. 10:30 AM). This will give me sufficient time to review what you have prepared and to provide you feedback on your work before class begins. I will give you a few moments at the beginning of class to review my feedback and to ask questions.

Always check the Calendar in Canvas (left-hand sidebar) for a complete list of homework assignments for each day. Simply looking at what is assigned from Connect will not suffice!

When sending me your homework electronically via GMAIL, please do not cut-and-paste from a Word or Pages document, or enter text directly into the GMAIL window. It's a whole lot easier for me to make comments on your work if you simply attach a WORD or PAGES document to the email, or send me a document created in GOODLE DOCS.

Presentations

I want you to become more and more comfortable speaking German **in real time** this semester. Aside from in-class discussions of the topics we'll be exploring, you will be making six brief (4-6minute) **oral presentations**. Each of these should be delivered as extemporaneously as possible. You may certainly use PowerPoint or Prezi to help structure your presentation, but even these props should be image rich and text poor.

Presentations are not just a way for you to learn more about contemporary German culture and become more proficient in speaking; they are also a way for you to inform other students about aspects of German-speaking countries that you find interesting. Everyone in class will thus be responsible for learning what information you provide; it may randomly find its way on quizzes or tests, especially the final exam. For this reason I will encourage students to ask you questions about your presentations so that they are confident that they understood the key points you have made. I will evaluate the quality of your presentation based on the rubric provided in this syllabus. Within a week of your presentation you can expect written feedback on your pronunciation, use of vocabulary and grammar, accuracy of content, and attractiveness of PowerPoint or Prezi.

By the second day of class you will need to commit to one of these assignment schedules:

Assignment	August	September	October	November
A	26	9; 22	16; 28	11
B	28	11; 24	18; 30	13
C	30	13; 26	21	1; 15
D		4; 16	2; 23	4; 18
E		6; 18	4; 25	6; 20

Quizzes

Rather than having you write two or three hour-long exams, I have decided to assign several quizzes on discrete vocabulary, grammar, and/or cultural items. Five of these are tentatively scheduled for **20 and 29 September; 9 October; and 8 and 22 November**. There will likely be others as I see fit. It's possible you might be taking a few quizzes on Canvas. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Final Exam

The final exam is scheduled for Friday, 13 December, from 9-noon. It will cover the vocabulary, grammar, and culture reviewed and introduced in this course and will be comprehensive.