

German 490
Supervised Independent Study in German
Spring Semester 2018
http://faculty.mercer.edu/weintraut_ej

Dr. Edward J. Weintraut
Knight Hall 202B (301-2916)
Office Hours: M 10-11
W 4:30-5:00
F 11:00-12:00

What is this course about?

This course is designed to help you examine in depth a particular author, work, or issue in German language, literature, culture, or society. Since I am currently writing about East German authors who reflect on the history and legacy of the East German state, you in this course will be conducting research on a similar topic, be it literary, political, or cultural. Examples of topics for investigation might be:

- Reasons for/consequences of taking flight from East Germany
- Reasons for/consequences of staying in East Germany
- Reasons for/consequences of the "Swords to Ploughs" movement in the 1980s
- Role of the Lutheran Church in East German life
- Role of the Stasi in East German life
- Role of Authors in East German life (e.g. Christa Wolf, Stefan Heym)
- Cause and aftermath of the Biermann "Scandal" of 1976
- West German perceptions of East German culture and society
- East and West German views on nationhood and prospects of unification

What books are required?

Brigitte Reimann, Die Geschwister (978-3746615301)
Peter Schneider, Der Mauerspringer (978-3499135323)
Edgar Wolfrum, Die Mauer (978-3406585173)
Wieland Führ, Die Berliner Mauer und innerdeutsche Grenze (978-3865681638)

We may decide later to read Ingo Schulze, Adam und Evelyn (978-3423138765)

How is the course structured?

Due to a variety of scheduling conflicts the only time we can meet together as a group on a regular basis is on Fridays between 2 and 3. Your attendance at each of these sessions is thus mandatory; your participation in discussion is paramount. You participate well by being prepared to make valuable contributions to the assignment under consideration: asking insightful questions; exploring implications of significant issues; sharing discoveries with other participants.

I will subjectively evaluate the quality of your contributions by this scale: A (8 points); B+ (7 points); B (6 points); C+ (5 points); C (4 points); D (3 points). Failure to meet either deadline

results in the grade of zero. The total number of points accrued by the end of the semester will determine your grade for "Participation."

In our meetings during the first half of the semester we will focus on the readings identified above; in the second half we will discuss the progress each student is making on the project and offer each other constructive criticism, both on the style and direction of the writing. Given the infrequency of regular meeting times we will be using the DISCUSSION feature on Canvas to share questions, concerns, and insights on a weekly basis. By 11:59 PM every Tuesday through 27 March you should make some contribution to the DISCUSSION board. In the first half of the semester this will usually be an exploration of some theme(s) or passage(s) from the work(s) we are reading—and it is not necessarily one, single observation! By 11:59 PM every Wednesday through 28 March you should comment meaningfully on the contribution of at least one other student.

I will subjectively evaluate the quality of your contributions by this scale: A (8 points); B+ (7 points); B (6 points); C+ (5 points); C (4 points); D (3 points). Failure to meet either deadline results in the grade of zero. The total number of points accrued by the end of the semester will determine your grade for "Discussion."

The focus of your research project must be decided by Friday, 16 March. The deadline for submitting an annotated bibliography for your project is Friday, 6 April. In the annotated bibliography you should: (1) summarize the source; (2) explain how/why it is germane to your research; and (3) evaluate how beneficial/reliable it is. You should identify at least ten sources, at least half of which should not be web-based. Late submissions will be penalized 5 points per calendar day delay.

You need to provide me a rough draft of your final paper no later than Friday, 20 April. This will allow me to offer constructive criticism on your argument and style at least a couple of weeks before the final draft is due. That deadline is 9 AM on Thursday, 3 May. Late submissions of the final paper will be penalized 5 points per hour delay.

How will my performance be graded?

Class Participation	10%
Canvas Discussions	15%
Annotated Bibliography	25%
Research Paper (due by 3 May at 9 AM)	50%

As in all courses, you are expected to observe the provisions of the Mercer Honor Code. Unless otherwise authorized, you may not solicit help on any class assignment from native or near-native speakers of German. I will report any perceived violation of the Honor Code immediately to the Honor Council, without exception.