More than any other city, Berlin has been a source and a theater for the forces shaping Western modernity. The city’s importance and its by turns glorious and catastrophic role in European culture and history have their origins in its peculiar development. Built on a swamp, in a poor duchy surrounded by more powerful states, it was remade during the Enlightenment as a center not only of military discipline and administrative control but also of learning and innovation. Increasingly characterized in the later nineteenth century by almost uncontrolled growth, it rose to the status of capital of the German Empire and became a center of science and technology. With rapid industrialization came sharp social polarization and bitter political conflict, but also the birth of aesthetic modernism and avantgarde culture. After the clamor for imperial power and colonial expansion culminated in the cataclysm of World War I, Berlin witnessed the unparalleled artistic explosion of the Weimar Republic. During the Nazi dictatorship the city became the point of origin of political terror, war and genocide. Still reduced to little more than “a pile of rubble near Potsdam” (Brecht), Berlin found itself after World War II on the frontline of the Cold War and remained forcibly divided for more than four decades between two radically different political and economic systems. Through a combination of historical sources, literature, philosophy, and a wide range of artifacts—from paintings over photographs to film, from archival to contemporary—we shall seek to understand Berlin’s significance and its current position at the heart of Europe. And we will speculate about its possible futures as a place of gathering and experiment for a population from across the world.

Class Format

Although “Berlin: Experiment in Modernity” is a single-credit course (4 US credits/8 ECTS), you should expect to spend more time on this course than you would for a “regular” course (e.g. a US junior seminar or Bard College Berlin elective). In addition to the two 90-minute seminar meetings each week (on Mondays and Wednesdays), we will go on excursions approximately every other week, usually on Friday afternoon. Excursions may involve student presentations, lectures or discussions. Most of them will take us to places in central Berlin, some to places farther afield. There is one overnight trip, to Weimar. All excursions are an integral part of the course and thus mandatory.
Required Texts (available for pickup at the Library)
Course Reader
Frank Mecklenburg and Manfred Stassen (eds.), *German Essays on Socialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Continuum, 1990)
Peter Weiss, *The Investigation* (Marion Boyars, 2000)

Additional texts are available on your Bard College Berlin “Google Drive” for download. Please print double-sided whenever possible, get a binder for the course, and bring paper copies of all readings to class.

Requirements
- Short weekly responses to the readings. (Please post them on the Google Drive.)
- Two essays (draft and final versions).
- Final examination.
- Informal writing assignments and quizzes.

***Please note: Use your new Bard College Berlin email account (j.doe@berlin.bard.edu) for all correspondence.***

Participation
This course is a seminar. Your consistent, vociferous, and thoughtful participation in our discussions is crucial to your success. Class sessions may include brainstorming and writing periods, in which you may work alone or with a partner. You are expected to take an active part in all activities.

***The use of laptops, tablets, phones or other electronic devices in the classroom is prohibited.***

Seminar Preparation and Weekly Responses
Please come prepared to seminar meetings and excursions: Upon reading the assigned texts every week, formulate a question or observation that you want the group to address. Paste it into the blank document shared with you on the Google Drive (labeled “Response Week x”), no later than Sunday, 16.00h. Before our meeting on Monday, please print out the document, read everybody else’s questions and prepare responses to a couple of them. Your notes should help you present your responses coherently in class.

Essays and Tutorials
Students write two versions of each essay. The first version has to be a complete and coherent essay. For the first paper: After handing in the first version, students will have individual tutorial meetings on how to improve their essays. For the second essay: Students bring two paper copies to class, one for me and one for a writing partner of their choice. Writing partners are expected to provide critical questions, comments, and suggestions for each other and to bring these (in writing) to the next seminar meeting. It is worth spending a substantial amount of time on revisions for your final version. For this process to function, hard copies of both the first and second versions have to be handed in on time. Extensions can only be granted in medical or other emergencies.
***All essays must be submitted both through the Bard College Berlin online system and in hard copy. Electronically submitted essays have to be in the European “A4” format! (In the MS Word “file” menu, choose “page setup,” then change the “paper size” from “US letter” to “A4.”)***

**Academic Honesty**

Bard College Berlin does not tolerate plagiarism. Intellectual honesty is at the heart of academic ethics and plagiarism is the most serious offence against it. Penalties include failure of the course, suspension from the university and expulsion. Please cite the ideas of others properly. See me if you have any questions about when or how to acknowledge your sources.

**Important Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deadline Essay 1, First Version</td>
<td>Monday, February 16</td>
<td>12.30h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline Essay 1, Final Version</td>
<td>Monday, February 23</td>
<td>23.59h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline Essay 2, First Version</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 1</td>
<td>12.30h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline Essay 2, Final Version</td>
<td>Monday, April 8</td>
<td>23.59h</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 13</td>
<td>10.00h-13.00h</td>
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**Grades**

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<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excursion Participation</td>
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</table>

***Please note: At Bard College Berlin, professors submit mid-term grades for essays and participation to the Registrar, from whom students can then retrieve them. (For Bard students, mid-term grades will also be posted on BIP.)***

**Attendance**

Attendance is required at all classes sessions and excursions. Absences are registered in all classes and lateness is registered as absence. We understand that serious illness and other bona fide emergencies may arise during the semester and students may miss up to two classes for these reasons without external documentation. For any additional absences a medical note (for illness) or other documentation (for emergencies) must be submitted to the Registrar within one week of the absence.

Finally, please be punctual and considerate. Switch off your phone and keep bathroom breaks to a minimum.

**This syllabus is subject to change. All updates to the schedule will appear on the electronic version of this document, on the Google Drive. You remain responsible throughout the semester for knowing where and when we meet for classes and outings, and what your assignments are for each meeting.**
Semester Overview

Orientation Week

Events with Professor Becker:

**January 21**
17.30 Welcome to Bard College Berlin (Cafeteria, W70)

**January 22**
14.00 General Academic Orientation, 13.00 (Lecture Hall, P98a)
15.00 Administrative Orientation, 10.30 (Seminar Room 2, P98)
19.00 Study Abroad Welcome Dinner, 18.30.

**January 23**
11.30-12.30 Individual Advising Meetings (Room 010, P24)
13.30-15.00 “Bard in Berlin” Orientation (Lecture Hall, P98a)
16.00-17.00 Individual Advising Meetings (Room 010, P24)

**January 24**
**Berlin Excursion:**
Visit to the exhibition on “Everyday Life in the GDR” (Haus der Geschichte), Kulturbrauerei (M1/U2 Eberswalder Straße). Zoltan Helmich will take you from campus to meet Professor Becker at 14.30 inside the museum entrance.

**Week One**

**January 26**
2015 Where Are We Now?
David Bowie, “Where Are We Now?” (Video, January 2013)

**January 28**
**Introduction to the Course: Berlin and Germany**
George Packer, “The Quiet German: The Astonishing Rise of Angela Merkel, the Most Powerful Woman in the World,” The New Yorker, December 1, 2014
“Chronology: Germany, 1800-1990,” in Mary Fulbrook (ed.), German History since 1800 (London: Arnold, 1997), pp. 585-595

**January 31-February 1**
**Berlin Weekend** (Excursions)
Visit to the Jewish Museum with Professors Soika and Dekel (Lindenstraße 9-14, 10969 Berlin).

**DATE TBD**
Visit to the German Bundestag (Reichstag Building). Special Tour and visit of Norman Foster’s dome. Please bring your passport or government-issued photo ID; you will need it to be admitted to the building. Meet at security.

**Week Two**

**February 2**
**1237-1870 Berlin, Brandenburg, Prussia**
With Dr. Aya Soika, Professor of Art History.
in Irit Rogoff (ed.), *The Divided Heritage. Themes and Problems in German Modernism* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 223-224

Architecture: Study images of
Andreas Schlüter et al., Berlin City Palace;
Carl Gotthard Langhans (1732-1808), Brandenburg Gate (1788-1791);
Johann Gottfried Schadow (1764-1850), *Quadriga* (1793);
Friedrich August Stüler (1800-1865), Old National Gallery (1876);
Paul Wallot (1841-1912), Reichstag Building (1884-1894).

**February 4**

1871-1890 *Berlin, Capital of the German Empire*

**Week Three**

**February 9**

1870-1900 *The Metropolis and the Arts I: Academic Painting and the Berlin Secession*
With Professor Soika.
Large, *Berlin*, “World City?” pp. 62-81
Shearer West, *The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890–1937: Utopia and Despair*, Chapter 1, pp. 12-32
Robert Köhler (1850-1917), *The Socialist* (1885), *The Strike* (1886)
Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945), *Misery* (1895-1896), *The Weavers’ Revolt* (cycle of six prints, 1895-1897)
Max Liebermann (1847-1935), *Cobbler’s Workshop* (1881), *The Net Menders* (1887-1889)
Walter Leistikow (1865-1908), *Lake Grunewald* (1895)
Lovis Corinth (1858-1925), *Self-Portrait with Skeleton* (1896), *The Blinded Samson* (1912)

**February 11**

1888-1918 *Berlin under Wilhelm II*

**February 13**

Friday Excursion: Alte Nationalgalerie (Museum Island).

**Week Four**

**February 16**

1884-1918 *The German Empire and Colonialism*
*Exberliner* 108: “Africa in Berlin” (September 2012)
Otto von Bismarck, Speech on “Pragmatic” Colonization (June 26, 1884), PDF
Wilhelm II., The “Hun Speech” (1900), PDF

**Essay 1, First Version Due.**

**February 17-18**

Individual Tutorials on Essay 1, first version.

**February 18**

1918-1923 Defeat, Revolution, Inflation
Study photographic documents of Berlin 1918-1919, in reader and online.

**Week Five**

**February 23**

1905-1914 The Metropolis and the Visual Arts II: Expressionism
With Professor Soika.
Large, *Berlin*, pp. 136-146 (“Keep Hittin’ ‘Em”), and reread p. 73
Georg Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (1903), in Donald N. Levine (ed.) *Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms* (University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 174-185
Shearer West, *The Visual Arts in Germany*, chapter 2, pp. 48-58
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1937), *Berlin Street Scene* (1913), *Street Scene* (1913), *Potsdamer Platz* (1914)
Karl Schmidt-Rottluff (1884-1976), *Three Nudes (Nidden)* (1913)
Erich Heckel (1883-1970), *Glassy Day* (1913)
Max Pechstein (1881-1955), *The Yellow and Black Tricot* (1910); *On Nidden Beach, Portrait of his Wife Lotte* (1911)
Emil Nolde (1867-1956), *Papua Boys* (1914)

**Essay 1, Final Version Due.**

**February 25**

1916-1920 Politics and the Avantgarde: Berlin Dada
With Professor Soika.
Richard Huelsenbeck and Raoul Hausmann, “What is Dadaism and What Does It Want in Germany?” (1919), in Motherwell (ed.), pp. 41-42
Study images online:
Hannah Höch, *Cut With the Kitchen Knife through the Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch in Germany* (1919)

**February 28**

Saturday Excursion: Museum für Film und Fernsehen (Museum of Cinema and Television). Potsdamer Straße 2 (Sony Center).
Week Six

March 2

1848-1914 Berlin and the European Labor Movement
Special Session with Sebastian Gerhardt, Topography of Terror and Haus der Demokratie und Menschenrechte.
Paul Göhre, Three Months as a Factory Worker and Journeyman (Leipzig, 1891)

March 4

1924-1932 Berlin, the Glittering Thing
Film: Walter Ruttmann, Berlin Symphony of a Great City (1927)
Alfred Döblin, “East of Alexanderplatz,” in Constantine (ed.), Berlin Tales

March 5

Thursday Excursion: Brecht-Haus, Chausséeéstraße 125. Meet there by 18.00; the tour starts promptly at 18.15.

Week Seven

March 9

Bertolt Brecht, The Threepenny Opera (1928)

March 11

Bertolt Brecht, The Threepenny Opera

—Spring Break—

Week Eight

March 23

1918-1933 The New Architecture: Modernism for the Masses
Reread Large, Berlin, pp. 206-207, 241
Photographic evidence of Weimar-Era housing, in Course Reader

March 25

1933-1939 Terror, Persecution, and Acquiescence
With Professor Soika.
Study images of Nazi architecture, especially:
Ernst Sagebiel: Imperial Aviation Ministry (1935), Tempelhof Airport Terminal (1935-1941);
Werner March: Olympiastadion (1936);
Plans for “Germania”: Albert Speer, model of the “Great Hall” (ca. 1940), model of the “North-South Axis” (ca. 1940);
Wilhelm Kreis, model of the “Soldiers’ Hall” (ca. 1943).

March 27

Week Nine
March 30
1939-1945 War and Genocide
Large, Berlin, “Now People, Arise, and Storm, Break Loose!,” pp. 319-367
Peter Weiss, The Investigation (1965) (Marion Boyars, 2000)
*If available, watch Giulio Ricciarelli, Im Labyrinth des Schweigens (Germany, 2014).

April 1
Peter Weiss, The Investigation

April 3
Federal Holiday

Week Ten
April 6
Federal Holiday

April 8
1945-1961 Occupation and “Denazification”
Large, Berlin, “Coming into the Cold,” pp. 369-417 (to “…richer relatives.”)

April 10
Friday Excursion: German-Russian Museum Karlshorst.
Guided tour with Sebastian Gerhardt. Meet Florian at the reception desk.

April 13
1945-1961 “Berlin, Capital of the German Democratic Republic”
Large, Berlin, “Coming into the Cold,” pp. 418-443
Tony Judt, Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945, “The Impossible Settlement,” pp. 104-7 (from “Thanks to German aggression…” to “…common problems”) and pp. 121-128 (from “Everyone expected…”)
Film: Frank Beyer, The Trace of Stones (1966)
April 15

1961-1989 The Wall
Large, Berlin, “The Divided City,” pp. 445-460 (to “…size and beauty”) and pp. 496-515 (“Real, Existing Socialism”)
Film: Frank Beyer, The Trace of Stones (1966)

Week Twelve

April 20

1960-1969 West Berlin: The City as Theater
Large, Berlin, “The Divided City,” pp. 460-66 (to “over the wall.”), 469-95
Ulrike Meinhof “Napalm and Pudding,” “Vietnam and Germany,” in Meinhof (ed. Karin Bauer), Everybody Talks About the Weather… We Don’t: The Writings of Ulrike Meinhof (Seven Stories Press, 2008)

April 22

1969-1989 West Berlin: Life on the Island
Film: Uli Edel, Christiane F. (Germany, 1981)

April 24


Week Thirteen

April 27

1989-1994 Peaceful Revolution and Reunification

April 29

1961-2015: City of Immigration
Large, Berlin, pp. 466-469 (“Little Istanbul”), pp. 572-580 (“Arrivals and Departures”), and reread pp. 8-12
Emine Sevgi Özdamar, “My Berlin,” in Constantine (ed.), Berlin Tales

Gökçe Yurdakul and Y. Michal Bodemann, “‘We Don’t Want to Be the Jews of Tomorrow’: Jews and Turks in Germany after 9/11,” *German Politics and Society* 24:2 (2006), pp. 44-67


[http://www.taz.de/142359/](http://www.taz.de/142359/)


**Weekend Excursion to Weimar**

**May 1**

Leave: Berlin Hbf on Friday morning.

**May 3**

Return: Berlin Hbf on Sunday, late evening.

**Week Fourteen**

**May 4**

1990-2015: Berlin and the Future of Europe

Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*, “The Old Europe—and the New,” pp. 736-43 (from “There was nothing…” to “…political elite”), “The Varieties of Europe,” pp. 761-64 (from “In order to understand…” to “…eastern Europe”).


**May 5**


**May 7**

Thursday Evening: Bard College Berlin Annual Conference “Privacy”

Keynote Address at 18.30. Institute for Cultural Investigation (ICI Berlin), Christinenstraße 18-19, Building 8; use elevator to third floor (U2 Senefelder Platz).

**May 8**

All day Friday: BCB Annual Conference: “Privacy” (ICI)

**May 9**


**Week Fifteen**

**May 13**

10.00-13.00 Final Examination.
I have read the syllabus for IS311 and I am aware of my obligations throughout the semester.

January__________, 2015
Date

Student signature