

Erinnerungsorte

GRMN 3120-001

Fall 2022

Professor Vance Byrd [*he/him*]

Office: Williams Hall 733

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Course Hours: MW 1:45–3:14pm

Office hours: MW 12:30–1:30 PM and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND COURSE GOALS

In this course, we will examine how Germans have turned to episodes from the past to make claims about the present and future. We will discuss why certain events in the past rather than others have been the object of commemoration; what these creations stood for originally; how their meanings have changed over the time; and the lessons, if any, these commemorative practices continue to teach us today. Along the way, we will learn about theories of collective memory (Halbwachs), the concept of “places of memory” (Nora, François/Schulze), and recent debates on multidirectional memory (Rothberg). We will address expressions of nationalism, Antisemitism, racism, ethnic conflict, (post)colonialism, nostalgia, guilt, perpetration, as well as episodes of military victory and loss in a wide variety of artistic forms as we explore what has constituted German cultures of remembrance globally. To grapple with these questions and problems, we will read letters, philosophical texts, political manifestos, newspaper articles, a novella, poetry, and two graphic novels. We will discuss caricatures, paintings, and music. You will approach these texts and their contexts through seminar discussions and written assignments: you will lead discussions, hold presentations, and draft essays. This intensive, collaborative course will help you consider cultural questions more subtlety, and you will answer these questions with more sophisticated linguistic competency in German. Taught in German.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Günter Grass, *Katz und Maus* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag). 149 S.

Nora Krug, *Heimat: Ein deutsches Familienalbum* (München: Penguin, 2018). 288 S.

Brigit Weyhe, *Madgermanes* (Berlin: avant-verlag, 2016). 240 S.

All other course readings will be available as downloadable PDFs on Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Attendance, Preparation, and Participation = 15%

Essay 1 = 15%

Essay 2 = 15%

Essay 3 = 15%

Take-Home Midterm Written Exam = 15%

Presentation = 15%

Final Oral Conversation about Commemoration = 10%

ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION, AND PARTICIPATION

Regular attendance, conscientious preparation, and active participation will help you do well in this course. Attendance will be recorded in this class. Please make sure to be in class on time. I

will give you a warning if you have two or more unexcused absences. If your absence is excused for a religious holiday or an official college activity, please let me know in advance. In case of serious emergencies, including health emergencies, we'll work with the college to find alternatives for completing the required work for this course.

Remember, you must have the course materials with you during class. It is crucial that you be up-to-date on the readings for every class period. Most of the time outside of class will be spent doing the assigned readings, watching videos, listening to podcasts, and writing. Some days we will have more to do, some days less. Make sure to schedule enough time to do homework.

Participation is more than just being there. It means sustained engagement with the course's sources and questions. It requires asking relevant questions that contribute to the discussion of the topic and responding to other's opinions, as well as connecting your thoughts to evidence provided in the course materials or class examples. You should speak at least once per class period in order to be an A-level participant. Classroom behavior must reflect a spirit of generosity and respect. Please, refrain from subjective opinions unless relevant. We must accept different viewpoints. One can criticize other's ideas only when it's done respectfully.

You will receive questions to guide your reading, to prepare you for the class discussion, and to help you make connections between the texts. Your written responses will constitute the reading journal, which you will post to Canvas. You should complete any homework assignments *before* each class period.

SHORT ESSAYS

You will write three essays on topics we have discussed in the course. I will circulate essay prompts in advance. The essays will be written in German and will vary in length (2–4 double-spaced typed pages). As always draft writing will help you avoid preventable mistakes and help you organize your work. Although this is not strictly a language course, part of your grade will be based on proper grammatical expression. However, I will evaluate your essays primarily based on coherence, clarity, and your understanding of the class materials. Some of the essays will be peer reviewed before you turn them in. The peer-editing rubric will make my expectations clear. You are responsible for citation according to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

PRESENTATION

You will be responsible for an 8- to 10-minute oral presentation on a place or problem of memory. I will distribute a sign-up sheet early on in the semester.

This type of assignment is important because carefully prepared oral presentations will help you share knowledge with your peers with confidence and increase your comfort with conducting research in German. In consultation with the instructor, you will select a presentation topic related to the course. Remember that oral expression is subject to revision like our written work. You will identify a peer and work with the oral presentation peer-editing worksheet. Your peer will give you feedback on your presentation. You will then take these comments into consideration and then share your improved oral presentation with everybody in class. Your classmates and I will provide you with feedback on your presentation's content and written form.

TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM

This assignment will give you an opportunity to demonstrate your careful and thoughtful attention to materials and questions raised in our in-class discussions about commemorative

culture. You will have from Wednesday after class until Sunday at 12:00 noon to prepare and submit the response to these questions.

ORAL FINAL CONVERSATION ABOUT COMMEMORATION

Rather than a written examination or final paper, you will be invited to an oral final conversation about places of memory and commemorative cultures. This thirty-minute conversation will be held in German and incorporate all of the material covered the entire semester. We will work together in the final class periods to prepare you for a successful conversation in which you can demonstrate everything you learned in this course.

DEADLINES

All relevant due dates will be listed on the syllabus. I expect that all papers will be turned in on time on or before the day they are due. **Each student is entitled to ONE 48-hour extension** during the semester. You do not need to provide a reason for the requested extension.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE INSTRUCTOR

I am available for consultation. I encourage you to contact me if you have questions or if you would like to learn more about the themes covered in this course. You may contact me by email. If it is an urgent matter, it is important that you leave a realistic amount of time for me to respond. I may not be able to respond to your email immediately, but I will try. If you send me an email the night before an assignment is due, you may not receive a response in time for it to be helpful for you.

I will hold office hours Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:30–1:30pm. You can always schedule an appointment with me at another time.

You might be required to attend some mandatory office hours this semester. You will have the opportunity to talk about the transition to Penn, advising, and course matters. If you cannot attend a scheduled appointment, it is your responsibility to notify me beforehand so we can reschedule.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

I strive to create a fully inclusive classroom. I welcome individual students to approach me about distinctive learning needs. In particular, I encourage students with disabilities to have a conversation with me and disclose how our classroom or course activities could impact the disability and what accommodations would be essential to you. You should register with Disability Services, Weingarten Center (220 South 40th St., Suite 260).

ACADEMIC HONESTY

According to the Policies and Procedures Handbook of the University of Pennsylvania, using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific and proper acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. If you are at all unsure about the appropriate form of acknowledgement in a particular situation, it is your responsibility, as stated in Penn's Code of Academic Integrity, <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>, to consult with the instructor to clarify any ambiguities. Plagiarism in any assignment will result in a failing grade for that assignment, and may result in further disciplinary action, which may include receiving a failing grade for the course. The use of any translation programs and/or websites is also considered plagiarism.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep, and taking time to relax. Taking care of yourself will actually help you achieve your academic goals more than spending too much time studying. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available on campus. An important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Take the time to learn about all that's available and take advantage of it. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or difficult feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty, or family member you trust for assistance connecting to the support that can help.