

History 342: Modern Germany

John McCole

Fall 2019 / MWF10-10:50 / PLC 189

Office hours: Thursdays 1-3 and by appointment, in McKenzie 303 (History Department)

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- *Assignments may still change for 2019, but there will be a midterm, a final, and other writing.*
- *This page describes the course topic, the requirements, what you'll learn, and important course policies.*
Be sure to read it carefully.
- *For a detailed schedule and readings, click the syllabus link to your left.*

Course Description

This course examines the paths of modern German history since the first national unification in 1871, up to and including the unification of the postwar west and east German states in 1990. Major topics will include:

- the social and religious politics of the German empire;
- the rise of mass political, social and cultural movements including nationalism, social democracy, and antisemitism;
- the roots of German imperialism and expansionist aims;
- the issue of Germany's responsibility for the first World War;
- the contentious, brilliant, tragic history of the Weimar Republic, Germany's first full-fledged democracy;
- Nazi Germany: causes and consequences of the Nazis' rise to power, and the realities of life in Nazi Germany;
- the Holocaust and other racial and political mass murders;
- the postwar partition of Germany in the Cold War, including both the western and eastern German states;
- the fall of the Wall, the reunification of Germany in 1990, and the issues facing Germany in the twenty-first century.

Throughout the course, we'll address major controversies about modern German history, including issues of historical explanation--*why* did things happen the way they did?--as well as political and moral responsibility. We will also track the question of whether or not it's helpful to think of modern German history as following a "special path"--what Germans call the *Sonderweg* debate.

The course will include a mixture of lecture and discussion. On most Fridays, we'll have discussions of the supplementary readings. (This means that attending on Friday is important.) Questions are always welcome during lecture, I'll provide time for general discussion as well.

For a detailed schedule of topics and readings, click the "syllabus" link to your left.

Course Requirements

- attendance and active participation in discussions
- a midterm exam, in class on Monday, October 29
- a two-hour final exam, on Monday, December 3 from 10:15-12:15
- an analysis of one weekly reading (2-3 pp.), due on the day the reading is to be discussed in class)
- one book review (6-8 pp.) from a list of books to be distributed, due no later than the first class in week 10

Weights:

midterm exam: 25%

final exam: 40%

weekly reading analysis: 10%

book review: 25%

total = 100%

Attendance and active participation can raise your grade by a notch (e.g. by raising a B+ to an A-).

Learning Objectives: or, what you can expect to learn in this course

If you work at it, you will:

- develop a sound knowledge of the events, trends, movements, and phases of modern German history;
- become a participant in debates over fundamental historical questions and moral and political issues that arise from modern German history;
- gain experience, skills, and confidence in learning about history by using a variety of materials, including primary sources, interpretive studies, scholarly articles, and fiction;
- and sharpen your interpretive reading and analytical writing skills.

Course Policies

Grading

- When you receive an individual assignment, it will describe the criteria that I'll use to grade it.
- I don't grade on a curve.
- I grade for accomplishment, not effort.
- These are my standards for grading, which follow the History Department's general guidelines as posted on our website:

A: Work that distinguishes itself through its sophisticated grasp of the material and unusual accomplishment, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free from errors

B: Work that solidly satisfies the main criteria of the assignment but lacks the element of distinction that carries the work into the realm of excellence.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect and satisfies none of the assigned criteria.

Late work and early exams

Please understand that these policies are in the interest of fairness to your fellow students:

1. Papers submitted late will be penalized. But it is *always* worth submitting work, even if it is late.
2. Makeup exams can only be given in case of a certified medical or personal emergency.
3. I don't give early final exams. Please make your plans for the end of term accordingly.

Academic honesty

All work that you submit for this course must be your own work. It must have been produced for this course--no reusing old papers. Please be sure you're familiar with the University's policies regarding academic honesty. When you submit work, you're certifying that you've complied with these guidelines.

Be sure you don't commit plagiarism. It's your responsibility to inform yourself about this issue.

Electronic devices in the classroom

Laptop computers and similar devices are permitted for purposes of taking notes. This is the only permissible use of laptops during lecture. At the start of the term, I won't restrict the use of laptops to any particular section of the room. Please respect the rights of your fellow students; don't create distractions by surfing the internet or doing other business. If I find that this policy isn't working out, I'll change it during the term. The use of cell phones and music devices is prohibited, period. Texting is always out of bounds.

Course Syllabus

Readings

Available for purchase at the UO Bookstore:

Frank B. Tipton, *A History of Modern Germany since 1815* (hereafter *HMG*)

Peter Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*

Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper*

On reserve at Knight Library, in addition to Tipton and Schneider (the library doesn't own the Hayes yet):

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans Into Nazis*

Omer Bartov, *Germany's War and the Holocaust*

Konrad Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories*

plus other readings available on the course's Canvas website under "Modules"

Course Schedule

Unit 1: Introduction: The German Problem / The Path to National Unification (October 2, 4, 7)

1: Introduction to the Course: A Little History of the German Problem

2: National Unity--on Whose Terms? The Politics of German Unification

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 1: "Introduction: From Generation to Generation;" Ch. 4, "The Age of Realism"

Unit 2: The German Empire I: Bismarck's Empire, 1871-1890 (October 9, 11, 14)

1: The Founders' Boom, the Constitution, and So-Called "Enemies of the Reich"

2: The Second Founding of the *Reich* and the Conservative 1880s

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 5, "An Anxious Generation, 1871-1890"

•Association of German Catholics, "Founding Manifesto" (download the .pdf file)

•Otto von Bismarck, "On the Polish Question" (download the .pdf file)

Unit 3: The German Empire II: Wilhelmine Germany, 1890-1914 (October 16, 18, 21)

1: The New Mass Politics and the Rise of Labor and Antisemitism

2: A Place in the Sun: Germany and Empire

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 6, "Neoclassical Façade and Modernist Revolt, 1890-1914;" Ch. 7, "Politics, Governance, and Diplomacy"

•The "Erfurt Program" (1891); Eduard Bernstein, "The Preconditions of Socialism" (1899); and Rosas Luxemburg, "Socialist Reform or Revolution?" (1899) (download the .pdf files)

•Peter Hayes, "Targets: Why the Jews?," Chapter 1 in Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, pp. 3-35.

Unit 4: Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918 (October 23, 25, 28)

1: The Question of German Responsibility and the Military History of the War

2: Remaking Society on the Home Front

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 8, “The First World War”

•Peter Fritzsche, *Germans Into Nazis*, “Introduction” and “July, 1914,” pp. 1-82

Unit 5: The Weimar Republic, 1918-1933: Germany’s First Democratic Republic (October 30, November 1, 4)

1: Revolution, Counterrevolution, and Crisis, 1919-1923

2: From Stabilization to Overthrow, 1924-1933

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 9, “An Expressionist Age;” Ch. 10, “The Politics of Feeling and the Search for Stability”

•“The Inflation Experience of a Family,” in Fritz Ringer, ed., *The German Inflation of 1923* (download .pdf file), pp. 119-146.

Wednesday, November 6: Midterm Exam (in class)

Unit 6: The Nazi Regime I: The Nazis in Power (November 8, 11, 13)

1: The Nazis’ “National Uprising” and Consolidation of Power

2: How the Nazi Regime Actually Worked and What It Did

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 11, “A ‘German Style’: The Nazi Generation”

•Peter Hayes, “Escalation: Why Murder?” in Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, pp. 73-113.

Unit 7: The Nazi Regime II: War, Holocaust, Genocide, and Mass Murder (November 15, 18, 20)

1: The Radicalization of Foreign Policy and Racial Policy

2: The War, the Holocaust, Genocide, Mass Murder, and Their Victims

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 12, “Nazi Politics: The Road to War and the Holocaust”

•Peter Hayes, “Annihilation: Why This Swift and Sweeping?” in Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, pp. 114-175.

[Omer Bartov, “Savage War: German Warfare and Moral Choices in World War II,” in Bartov, *Germany’s War and the Holocaust* (download the .pdf file)]

Unit 8: Postwar: Divided Germany, West and East, 1945-1973 (November 22, 25, 27)

1: “Zero Hour” and Partition, 1945-1949

2: The Federal Republic and the “Long Road West”

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 13, “Divided German in the Age of Economic Miracles”

•Jarausch and Geyer, “Unsettling German Society: Mobility and Migration,” in Jarausch and Geyer, *Shattered Past, 197-220* (download the .pdf file)

•Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper*

Unit 9: From Two Germanies to One, 1973-1989 (December 2, 4, 6)

1: The Making of Stasiland: The German Democratic Republic in the East

2: The Road to Reunification

Readings:

- Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 14, “A Postmodern Generation: West Germany and East German after the Miracle, 1973-1989,” and Ch. 15, “Neo-Realism: Reunification and Reunited Germany”
- Jarausch and Geyer, “A Struggle for Unity: Redefining National Identities,” in *Shattered Past*, 221-244 (download the .pdf file)

Final Exam: Monday, December 9, 10:15-12:15 in the classroom