

History 342: Modern Germany

John McCole

Fall 2022, MWF 10-10:50 in Condon 104

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Office hours: drop in Thursdays 1-3 in 303 McKenzie or by appointment at other times (email me)--or make a Zoom appointment (email me)

For quick questions, you can email me at any time (mccole@uoregon.edu).

• This page describes the course topic, requirements, what you'll learn,

and important course policies. Be sure to read it carefully. Ask questions!

• For a detailed schedule and readings, click the syllabus link to your left.

Course Description

We'll be exploring 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. Our major topics will include:

- the social and religious politics of the German empire, focusing on issues of inclusion and exclusion;
- the rise of new mass movements--political, social and cultural--including radical nationalism, social democracy, and antisemitism;
- the roots of German imperialism and of Germany's expansionist aims;
- the issue of Germany's responsibility for the first World War;
- the contentious, brilliant, tragic history of Germany's first full-fledged democracy, the Weimar Republic;
- 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 surprising creation of a successful postwar democracy in Germany;
- the fall of the Wall, the reunification of Germany in 1990, and the big issues facing Germans in the twenty-first century

Throughout the course, we'll address major controversies about modern German history, including historical explanation--*why* did things happen the way they did?--as well as political and moral responsibility for the past.

We'll also be tracking 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 be a mixture of lecture and discussion. On Fridays and, later in the term, on Mondays, we'll have discussions of the supplementary readings. **Attending discussions is important--both for your grade and to get the most out of the course.** 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

- **participation:** attend class, and actively participate in weekly discussion sessions, which are based on assigned supplementary readings (10% of your course grade)
- **quizzes** on the readings and lectures (approximately 6) (10%)
- a **sit-down midterm exam** in class on Monday, October 24 (20%)
- a **take-home final exam** due Wednesday, December 7 (during exam period) (20%)
- an extended **analysis of one of the supplementary primary source readings** (4-5 pp.), due Wednesday, November 2 (20%)
- one **analytical book review** (6-3 pp.) from a list of books I'll provide, due Monday, November 28 by 11:59 p.m. (20%)

MY POLICY ABOUT ABSENCE FROM DISCUSSIONS: if you need to miss a discussion, I'll give you an alternative, written assignment. But please don't make a habit of missing discussions except for necessary occasions--you'll be depriving yourself of an important part of the course learning experience.

What you can expect to learn in this course

If you work at it, you'll:

- learn the basics of modern German history: the major events and issues;
- become a participant in debates over some fundamental historical questions--and moral and political controversies--that are part of 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 these skills transfer to many other parts of your life;
- sharpen your interpretive reading and analytical writing skills.

Course Policies

Dealing with Covid-related absences

Please do the right thing and observe the UO's current policy about Covid-related quarantines. Don't come to class sick! I won't penalize you for being absent, and I'll provide help to make sure you don't miss any material that we cover while you're out. You can find the UO's current policies here:

<https://coronavirus.uoregon.edu/?%22>

Academic honesty--important, please read this!

I take academic honesty seriously. Please be sure that you are familiar with the University's policies regarding academic honesty. They're part of the Student Conduct Code, and can be found here:

<https://dos.uoregon.edu/code-procedures>

All work that you submit for this course, including papers and exams, must be your own, and it must have been produced for this course. When you submit work for the course, you are certifying that you have complied with these guidelines.

Be sure you do not inadvertently commit plagiarism. To learn more, I recommend [this excellent resource from Bowdoin College, which also explains how to cite things correctly.](#)

Late work and early exams

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

Papers submitted late will be penalized. The penalty will be modest at first, then

gradually increasing depending on how late. But it's always worth your while to submit work, even if it is late.

For the first 24 hours late, the penalty is one grade notch--for instance, a B becomes a B minus. After a week, the penalty reaches one full grade, the maximum penalty. Again, it's always worth your while to submit work even if it's late.

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's weak in every aspect and satisfies none of the assigned criteria.

Electronic devices in class

Please, NO CELL PHONES IN CLASS. Never.

Readings

Available for purchase through UO Bookstore, but you can use any vendor you prefer:

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

•Peter Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*

•Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper*

Plus: other readings are available in each week's Module and are listed in the schedule below.

On reserve at Knight Library:

to be announced

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
(September 28, 30)

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"

•Carl Schurz, "Lessons of the Revolution of 1848" (download the .pdf from this unit's Module)

Unit 2: The German Empire I: Bismarck's Empire, 1871-1890 (October 3, 5, 7)

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

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

Friday, October 7: discussion of Bismarck, "On the Polish Question"

Readings:

- Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 5, “An Anxious Generation, 1871-1890”
- Association of German Catholics, "Founding Manifesto" (download the .pdf file from this unit's Module)
- Otto von Bismarck, “On the Polish Question” (download the .pdf file from this unit's Module)

Unit 3: The German Empire II: Wilhelmine Germany, 1890-1914 (October 10, 12, 14)

- 1: The New Mass Politics and the Rise of Labor and Antisemitism
- 2: A Place in the Sun: Germany's Pursuit of Empire

Readings:

- Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 6, “Neoclassical Façade and Modernist Revolt, 1890-1914;” Ch. 7, “Politics, Governance, and Diplomacy”
- Peter Hayes, "Targets: Why the Jews?," Chapter 1 in Hayes, *Why? Explaining the Holocaust*, pp. 3-35.
- The “Erfurt Program” (1891); Eduard Bernstein, “The Preconditions of Socialism” (1899); and Rosa Luxemburg, “Socialist Reform or Revolution?” (1899) (download the .pdf files from this unit's Module)
- Heinrich Claß, *If I Were Kaiser* (download the excerpt from this unit's Module)

Unit 4: Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918 (October 17. 19. 21)

- 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 (download the .pdf file from this unit's Module)

IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 24

Unit 5: Germany's First Democratic Republic: The Weimar Republic, 1918-1933 (October 26, 28, 31)

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

2: From Stabilization to Collapse and 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*, pp. 119-146 (download the .pdf file from this unit's Module)

Unit 6: The Nazi Regime I: The Nazis in Power (November 2, 4, 7)

Wednesday, November 2: primary source analysis paper due

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 9, 14)

1: The Radicalization of Foreign Policy and Racial Policy

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11: NO CLASS--VETERANS' DAY (UO-OBSERVED HOLIDAY)

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 from this unit's Module)]

Unit 8: Postwar: Divided Germany, West and East, 1945-1973 (November 16, 18, 21)

1: "Zero Hour" and Partition, 1945-1949

2: The Federal Republic and the "Long Road West"

Readings:

•Tipton, *HMG*, Ch. 13, "Divided Germany in the Age of Economic Miracles"

•Peter Schneider, *The Wall Jumper*

•Jarausch and Geyer, "Unsettling German Society: Mobility and Migration," in Jarausch and Geyer, *Shattered Past*, 197-220 (download the .pdf file and the discussion questions from this unit's Module)

Unit 9: From Two Germanies to One, 1973-1989 (November 23, 28)

NOTE: I'LL **RECORD** A CLASS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23 since that's the day before Thanksgiving.

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”]]] NOT REQUIRED FALL 2020

•Jarausch and Geyer, “A Struggle for Unity: Redefining National Identities,” in *Shattered Past*, 221-244 (download the .pdf file from this unit's Module)

Unit 10: Since Reunification: Germany in Our Time (November 30, December 2)

1: Persistent Divisions: Osis and Wesis in the Berlin Republic

2: Some Big Issues Facing Germans in the Twenty-First Century

Readings:

Tipton, *HMG*, 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)

Take-home final exam due Wednesday, December 7 by 5 p.m.