

# GERM 114: GERMAN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

School of Languages and Cultures

**Trimester 2 2008**

**18 Points**

## STAFF

Dr Margaret Sutherland (Course Co-ordinator)	Room vZ 615	Tel. 463-5975
Dr Richard Millington	Room vZ 613	Tel. 463-5976
Dr Monica Tempian	Room vZ 614	Tel. 463-5548

All staff are happy to discuss students' concerns with them at any time, or to provide additional information about the course. Such information is regularly given in class announcements and on Blackboard. German staff have no specially designated office hours, but students may make an appointment with the German Administrator, if the staff member they wish to see is unavailable for consultation at any time.

## CLASS TIMES AND ROOMS

GERM 114 is a Second Trimester course of three hours per week, involving lectures and seminar discussion.

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday      4.10 – 5.00 pm      HU (Hunter) LT 119

## COURSE AIMS

GERM 114 aims to introduce students to the basic facts of, and interrelations between, political, social and cultural developments and attitudes in Germany from the time of its division into the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic in 1949 to the present day. As well as being given factual information and analysis, students will study aspects of German fiction, and film. This course is taught and assessed entirely in English and is open to anyone interested in this subject. All materials are studied in English translation.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course students should be able to:

- demonstrate an informed understanding of aspects of Germany from 1949 to the present day;
- outline Germany's physical and political geography;
- identify and discuss some key values and cultural concepts in German society;
- demonstrate familiarity with facets of German writing and film.

## SET TEXTS

Students are asked to buy two texts:

Bernhard Schlink's novel, *The Reader* (\$27.99), available at VicBooks. It will be used in Weeks 4 and 5.

The *GERM 114 Handbook* available from Student Notes, Student Union Building.

## TEACHING METHOD

Classes will consist of lectures and seminars, supplemented by reading materials and films. Students are expected to take an active part in class and to contribute their own background knowledge on the topic under discussion.

## ESTIMATED WORKLOAD

In addition to the three class hours, eight to eleven additional hours per week. This will naturally vary according to the knowledge of Germany with which the student comes to the course.

## ASSESSMENT

The assessment programme is designed to evaluate the extent of the student's understanding and knowledge of a topic and to assess the student's ability to research a topic, organise thoughts and insights, and express them in a lucid, well-documented way, both in class seminars and in essay form. To help in the latter, students will be given the German Programme's detailed *Notes on the Presentation of Essays*, which is also available on Blackboard

GERM 114 is assessed by:

1. One essay which counts 30% towards the final result. **See the list of essay topics below.**
2. One seminar paper on a set topic. These seminars will be researched and presented in groups, but each group member is expected to do an equal share of the work and to take over part of the presentation. The seminar counts 20% towards the final result.
3. A final two-hour examination. This is not an open book exam. It counts 50% towards the final result. All students enrolled in the course are expected to be available during the examination period 17 October - 8 November.

The essay and the seminar are on individual topics relating to the society and culture of modern Germany. Seminar dates **must** be observed. The seminar allocations will be finalised in the second week of the course. **See the list of seminar options below.** Students will be able to sign up for their seminar topics and dates on Blackboard.

The examination will cover all areas studied in the course, but students will have a choice of questions to be answered.

## THE ESSAY

The essay is worth 30% of the final mark and is due by 5pm on **Monday, 11 August** (beginning of Week 6).

All assignments **must be submitted in two forms**:

1. An electronic copy is to be uploaded to the relevant assignment drop box on the GERM 114 Blackboard website
2. **AND a print-out** is to be placed in the German assignment box located to the left of the School of Languages and Cultures Reception area on Level 6 of von Zedlitz. The print-out must include a cover sheet available from SLC Reception or Blackboard.

**Assignments will not be considered complete until submitted in both forms.**

## ESSAY DEADLINE

Essays *must* be handed in on time. Students prevented by uncontrollable circumstances from completing an essay on time must, *in advance of the deadline*, formally request an extension of time from the lecturer. In cases of illness, accident or bereavement, this can be done by telephone. Essays submitted late without explanation will have penalty marks deducted at the rate of two marks a day; in the case of extreme lateness, the essay will not be marked and the student will not receive Terms (see below).

Here are five basics for essay writing. See also the *Notes on the Presentation of Essays*.

- The essay should not exceed the word-limit of 1000 words.
- It must have a 5 cm left margin. (NOTE this instruction, which is often ignored!)
- It should be typed with double-spacing (i.e. vertical spacing between lines).
- Use only one side of the paper.
- Give page-numbers.

A choice of topics is given below. **Note: You MAY NOT choose the same topic for your essay and your seminar.**

## ESSAY TOPICS

1. What was the Berlin Blockade (1948-1949)? What effect did it have on the future development of Germany?
2. Examine and explain the electoral system introduced into West Germany in 1949.
3. Why was the year 1968 important in different ways for both West and East Germany? Discuss the events which made this year important for both countries
4. What was the Economic Miracle in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) and how did it affect the lives of the people?

5. Discuss some of the methods used by East German citizens to attempt to escape the regime in the GDR.
6. What was the Stasi in East Germany and how did it operate?
7. Who are the Sorbs? Examine their situation during the Regime of the German Democratic Republic and today.
8. **EITHER**  
Discuss the significance of reading and the inability to read in Bernhard Schlink's novel, *The Reader*.  
**OR**  
Discuss the relationship between the three parts of Bernhard Schlink's novel, *The Reader*.

## SEMINAR TOPICS

Below is a list of possible seminar topics you may choose from. If you have an alternative topic you would like to do, please discuss it with your lecturer first. **Please Note: You may not choose the same topic for your seminar as for your essay.**

- The 2005 general election and the new Grand Coalition
- Unemployment and recent social welfare reforms
- Immigration and citizenship laws today
- Turkish Berlin
- Die Russlanddeutschen (Russia-Germans)
- Berlin as the new capital city
- The new Holocaust memorial
- Neo-Nazis and xenophobia
- Currency reform: Ost-Marks, D-Marks, Euros
- *Ostalgie* - Remembering the DDR
- Socialism - theory and practice in the DDR
- Everyday life in the DDR
- Cuisine in Germany - old and new
- Higher Education in Germany today
- The Green Movement
- Refuse Management
- Soccer
- History of the Berlin Wall
- Family life since 1949
- Austrian history since 1945
- Political structure and major institutions of the FRG
- Political structure and major institutions of the DDR
- Political structure and major institutions of Austria



**Holocaust Memorial**



**Jewish Museum, Berlin**

- The FRG as a federal state (*Bund* and *Länder*)
- The media in Germany today
- Important museums
- Religion since 1949
- The German transport network
- The FRG and the European Union
- The DDR and the Warsaw Pact
- Germans on holiday
- The Love Parade
- *Deutsche Qualität* - successful German exports
- A German *Land* (of student's choice) - geography, economy, character
- A prominent German politician / sportsperson / writer / artist / musician / director / actor / etc  
(of student's choice)



Love Parade, Berlin

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

## TURNITIN

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <<http://www.turnitin.com>>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. At the discretion of the head of School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by turnitin. You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

## MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The minimum course requirements which must be satisfied in order to complete the course are: regular attendance at **at least** 80% of all three sections of the course, satisfactory completion of the essay, presentation of the seminar, and completion of the final examination. Unless informed to the contrary, students may assume they have been awarded Terms.

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES AND STUDENT EVALUATIONS

In the second week of lectures, staff will facilitate the election of a class representative. Student reps are a valuable means of communication between teaching staff and students. Each trimester student reps of SLC courses will meet together with the Head of School. At the end of the course students may be asked to fill out questionnaires prepared by the University's Teaching and Development Centre in order to evaluate individual lecturers' performance and/or the course as a whole.

## CONTACT PERSON

**The name of the School's Disability Liaison Person is:**

**Dr Richard Millington**

**vZ 613**

**Tel: 463-5976**

**Email: [richard.millington@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:richard.millington@vuw.ac.nz)**

The name of the School's Contact Person for Maori and Pacific Students is:

**Dr Richard Millington**

**vZ 613**

**Tel: 463-5976**

**Email: [richard.millington@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:richard.millington@vuw.ac.nz)**

## GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Information on the general University Policies and Statutes can be found on Blackboard for this course.

**TIMETABLE**

Week 1	Mon	7 July	Introduction to Course (Sutherland)
	W, Th	9, 10 July	Federal Republic of Germany (Sutherland)
Week 2	Mon	14 July	Federal Republic of Germany (Sutherland)
	W, Th	16, 17 July	German Democratic Republic (Sutherland)
Week 3	M, W, Th	21, 23, 24 July	German Democratic Republic (Sutherland)
Week 4	Mon	28 July	Fall of the Wall and beyond (Sutherland)
	Wed	30 July	Growing up in the GDR (Szczepanski)
	Thu	31 July	Schlink, <i>The Reader</i> – lecture (Sutherland)
Week 5	Mon	4 Aug	Schlink, <i>The Reader</i> – discussion (Sutherland)
	Wed	6 Aug	Schlink, <i>The Reader</i> – discussion (Sutherland)
	Thu	7 Aug	Student Seminars (Millington)
Week 6	M, W, Th	11, 13, 14 Aug	Student Seminars (Millington)
MID-TRIMESTER BREAK			
Week 7	M, W, Th	1, 3, 4 Sept	Student Seminars (Millington)
Week 8	M, W, Th	8, 10, 11 Sept	Student Seminars (Millington)
Week 9	M, W, Th	15, 17, 18 Sept	Post-war Times – film (Tempian)
Week 10	Mon	22 Sept	Post-war Times – film (Tempian)
	Wed	24 Sept	Political Fabric – literature (Tempian)
	Thu	25 Sept	Political Fabric – film (Tempian)
Week 11	M, W	29 Sept	Political Fabric– film and literature (Tempian)
	Wed	1 Oct	Political Fabric– film and literature (Tempian)
	Thu	2 Oct	Reunification – film (Tempian)
Week 12	M, W, Th	6, 8, 9 Oct	Reunification – film (Tempian)

## DETAILED OUTLINE OF TOPICS FOR THE FILM AND LITERATURE SECTION

### DR TEMPIAN (WEEKS 9 – 12)

1. **Post-war Times.** The “Economic Miracle” of the 50s as reflected by the New German Cinema: Rainer Werner Fassbinder, *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (Film, 115min).
2. **The Political Fabric** in Artistic Perspective: Wolf Biermann, *The Ballad of the Stasi* (1967, text and recordings); Günter Grass, *My Century* (1999, text excerpts); Heinrich Böll, *The Lost Honour of Katharina Blum* (Film, 100min); extension activity: Heinrich Böll, *Murke’s Collected Silences* (1958, text).
3. **Reunification:** Wolfgang Becker, *Good Bye, Lenin!* (Film, 120min); extension activity: Judith Hermann, *The Summerhouse, Later: Stories* (1998, text).

**Students are expected to read the text excerpts prior to the class which will include seminar discussions based on active group work.**

### BACKGROUND LITERATURE

- Briel, Holger (ed). *German Culture and Society: the Essential Glossary* (2002).
- Burns, Rob (ed). *German Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (1995).
- Elsaesser, Thomas & Wedel, Michael (eds). *The BFI Companion to German Cinema* (1999).
- Furness, Raymond & Humble, M. (eds). *A Companion to Twentieth-Century German Literature* (1997).
- Phipps, Alison. *Contemporary German Cultural Studies* (2002).