

0601H312

Germany since 1945

Instructor: TBA

E-mail: TBA

Time: December 15, 2025 - January 16, 2026

Office Hours: By Appointment

Contact Hours: 60 (50 minutes each)

Credits: 4

Course Description

This class traces the German History from the end of World War II to the present. We will study the formation of two separate states: the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, the everyday life under communism and democracy, relations between the two Germanies, and the role of these states in the Cold War. We will analyze the rise of left-wing terrorism, discuss the role of atonement for the crimes of the Holocaust, and compare the lives of workers in the two states. We will then trace the events leading to the fall of the Berlin Wall and think about the many challenges Germans continue to face following reunification.

Required Textbook(s)

Readings and screenings will be provided by the instructor.

Course Objectives

- To explore the crucial and ongoing impact of competing memories and conflicting narratives on a continent devastated and ripped apart in war and genocide, but eventually united in the pursuit of peace and economic cooperation.
- Introducing the skills of primary and secondary source analysis and strengthen student reading comprehension, critical thinking, and analytical writing.
- The significant themes of this course include the development of political traditions of sovereignty and public representation, imperialism, industrialization, and the ways in which these were implicated in the growth of nationalism and spread of capitalism.

Course Schedule

Please note that the schedule is meant to give an overview of the major concepts in this course. Changes may occur in this calendar as needed to aid in the student's development.

Week 1: Germany's Zero Hour, 1945-1949

- Watch recordings for Section 1: Germany's Zero Hour
- No Assignment Due for Week 1

Lesson Topics:

1. Course Introduction
2. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich
3. Total Defeat
4. Rubble Women (*Trümmerfrauen*)
5. Potsdam Conference
6. Judgement at Nuremberg
7. De-Nazification
8. Social and Cultural Dislocation
9. Zones of Occupation (*Fragebogen*)
10. Berlin Airlift
11. West Germany: Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)
12. East Germany: German Democratic Republic (GDR)

Week 2: Beyond the Wall, 1949-1970

- Watch recordings for Section 2: Colonization and Enlightenment (1550-1815)

- Research Paper Proposal (Due Friday at 11:59 AM BJT)

Lesson Topics:

1. Architecture of Division
2. West Germany Under Adenauer
3. West Germany and NATO
4. East German Uprising of June 17, 1953
5. East Germany and The Warsaw Pact
6. Culture and Politics in 1950s West Germany
7. Second Berlin Crisis
8. The Spiegel Affair
9. The Recession of 1966-67
10. Germany Confronts Its Past
11. Student Protest and Radicalization
12. Countercultural Revolt

Week 3: Crisis and Change, 1969-1979

- Watch recordings for Section 3: Crisis and Change
- Midterm Exam (Due Friday at 11:59 AM BJT)

Lesson Topics:

1. The Berlin Wall Expands
2. GDR and “The Better Germany”
3. Political Transitions in GDR
4. *Ostpolitik*: Relations Normalize
5. Primacy of Social Policy, East and West
6. Democracy and Dictatorship
7. Guillame Affair
8. 1970s Energy Crisis
9. Immigration and Social Movements
10. Counter-Terrorism and International Security
11. Creating A GDR Identity
12. Helsinki Accords

Week 4: Collapse, Revolution, Unification, 1980-1991

- Watch Recordings for Section 4: Collapse, Revolution, Unification
- Research Paper (Due Friday at 11:59 AM BJT)

Lesson Topics:

1. The Peace Movement
2. *Die Wende*
3. Integration and Multiculturalism
4. Dissent in the GDR
5. Fall of the Berlin Wall

6. Debating Unification
7. Politics of Unification
8. *Treuhandanstalt*: Managing Collapse
9. “Ossis,” “Wessis,” and the Divided East
10. The Asylum Crisis

Week 5: A German Europe or a European Germany?, 1991-Present

- Watch Recordings for Section 5: The Red-Green Coalition
- Final Exam (Due Friday at 11:59 AM BJT)

Lesson Topics:

1. Germany and the European Union
2. Germany After the Treaty Maastricht
3. German Military Interventions
4. Renewable Energy Sources Act
5. The Berlin Republic
6. *Ostalgie*
7. Merkel’s Germany
8. Germany and the Great Recession
9. The Russian Crisis (of the 2010s)
10. Refugee Crisis of 2015
11. The Populist Challenge
12. 2021 Federal Election and Beyond

Grading Policy

Your final grade for this semester is determined by your completion of all exams, your research paper, and participation in discussion and other in-class activities. You will notice that your grade is dependent upon only a few assignments. As such, it is required that you at least complete all of the major assignments in order to be eligible to pass.

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| ● Research Paper Proposal | 10% |
| ● Midterm Exam (Sections 1-3) | 30% |
| ● Research Paper | 30% |
| ● Final Exam (Sections 4-5) | 30% |
| ● Extra Credit German Film Review | +10% |

This class operates on a points system. No plus/minus grades will be given on papers or exams.

Exams:

There will be two exams this semester: a midterm and a final exam. Both exams will consist of 25 multiple choice questions, worth 30% of your total grade. The exams will have students connect to the pre-recorded lectures and related course material. The final exam will not be a cumulative but will cover all material following the midterm.

Research Paper Proposal:

At the end of Week 2, students will develop a short proposal for a research paper, which they will submit at the end of Week 4. The purpose of the proposal is to give you a chance to think about what questions you want to answer in your final paper, as well as to provide for me an opportunity to give you some feedback/suggestions about your topic. This activity is an opportunity to create a blueprint for how you will proceed with your research project.

Research Paper:

Students will also develop a 5-7 – page (double-spaced) research paper on either an important person or event related to modern German history, politics, or culture. While it is important to prove that you have internalized and gained recallable knowledge about modern German history, it is even more important that you are able to think critically on particular historical events and make evidence-based arguments and conclusions in relation to those events.

I will certainly help you find an appropriate topic as we progress throughout the semester, but my initial suggestion would be to take the opportunity to explore a person or event that you are not as familiar with. This will make the research process much more interesting and should help you to avoid writing a paper based on your preconceived notions about your chosen person/event.

Grading Scale

The instructor will use the grading system as applied by JNU:

Definition	Letter Grade	Score
Excellent	A	90~100
Good	B	80~89
Satisfactory	C	70~79
Poor	D	60~69
Failed	E	Below 60

Academic Integrity

As members of the Jinan University academic community, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic coursework and activities. Academic dishonesty, includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, i.e., misrepresenting as one's own work any work done by another; submitting the same paper, or a substantially similar paper, to meet the requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of the instructors concerned; or sabotaging other students' work within these general definitions. Instructors, however, determine what constitutes academic misconduct in the courses they teach. Students found guilty of academic misconduct in any portion of the academic work face penalties that range from the lowering of their course grade to awarding a grade of E for the entire course.