

*Syllabus*

**Hist 314: History of Germany**

Fall 2011, George Mason University

Instructor: Mark R. Stoneman, Ph.D.

Classes: Tuesdays, 7:20–10:00 p.m., Nguyen Engineering Building 1107

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 6:00–7:00 p.m., Robinson B 377D

Email: [mstonema@gmu.edu](mailto:mstonema@gmu.edu)

Blackboard: <http://mymason.gmu.edu>

**Description**

This course will explore social, economic, cultural, and political developments in German history. It will concentrate on the period from 1815 to 1989, devoting about two thirds of the semester to the twentieth century; however, it will also consider legacies from the medieval, early modern, and revolutionary eras, as well as look briefly at Germany’s most recent past. The major topics we will cover include the dual revolutions of the nineteenth century—industrial and political—and their accompanying social and cultural effects; the creation of a German nation-state in 1871 from a loose collection of independent kingdoms, principalities, and city-states; developments in war and society that led not only to the creation of a German nation-state but also to the two World Wars that ended in Germany’s division and the Cold War; the integration of West Germany into NATO and the European Community, on the one hand, and East Germany into the Warsaw Pact and Soviet economic structures, on the other hand; and, finally, reunification of the capitalist West and communist East within the context of Western economic, political, and security frameworks. The World Wars and Holocaust will pose central interpretive challenges for us; however, we will consider other lines of development, as well.

The goal of this course is not only to learn about this specific historical material, but also to foster your historical thinking skills more generally. In addition, the course will help you to cultivate your critical thinking, critical reading, and analytic writing abilities. In fact, only by applying these skills can you truly begin to understand the material—a process that entails much more than memorizing an assemblage of facts, names, dates, and places.

With this broad aim in mind, we will read six required books, including two collections of primary sources, which we will supplement with an online source collection. I will spend a modest portion of the classes lecturing and—for the twentieth century—showing relevant film excerpts; however, much of the course will depend on your active participation in class, where we will discuss the required materials. We will follow this approach, because the most effective way to learn history is to *do* history, that is, to read, to think, to discuss, and to write history. Only by assuming responsibility for your own learning and actively working with the material will you begin to make it your own.

**Requirements**

Below are the five graded requirements for the course, each of which contributes to your overall course grade according the percentages that follow them:

- Informed class participation 10%
- First source analysis paper (3-4 pages) 15%
- Second source analysis paper (3-4 pages) 15%
- Midterm exam (map, identification) 20%
- Final exam (map, identification, essay) 40%

Participation includes attendance, which is mandatory, but means much more. Also, while the participation grade is “only” 10 percent, there is a direct correlation between your efforts there and the results in your papers and exams. The papers will be based on primary sources from the assigned readings in the schedule below. The midterm exam covers only the first third of the course, which is why it is worth half as much as the final exam. The map and identification portions of the final exam will only cover material since the midterm; however, the essay portion of the final will be cumulative. That is, the

essay on the final can draw on material from the entire semester. Details will be posted to Blackboard according to the schedule below.

## **Grading**

With a class this size, it will take me about two weeks to grade a complete set of papers or exams. The big exception is the final exam, because I do not add any feedback to those in order to meet the university's tight deadline for submitting course grades.

Grades for all assignments are based on a 100-point scale. You will either see a number on your assignment or you will see a letter grade. If you see a letter grade, please note that I record that letter grade in my spreadsheet as a number using the following conversions: A = 95 (occasionally higher for particularly excellent work), A- = 92.5, A-/B+ = 90, B+ = 87.5, B = 85, B- = 82.5, B-/C+ = 80, C+ = 77.5, C = 75, C- = 72.5, C-/D+ = 70, D = 65, F = 55, and not submitting an assignment = 0.

I calculate course grades according to the weighting in the requirements section above. The cutoff for an A in the course is a 93 average, for an A- a 90 average, for a B+ an 87.5 average, for a B an 83, for a B- an 80, for a C+ a 77.5, for a C a 73, for a C- a 70, and for a D a 60. Like everything else in this syllabus, these cutoff scores are nonnegotiable.

At the end of the semester, I will email each student a breakdown of his or her grades, detailing the math that produced the final result.

## **Communication**

Please do not try to call me, as I have no campus phone. The best way to reach me outside of class and office hours is via email to [mstonema@gmu.edu](mailto:mstonema@gmu.edu). Also, you should contact me from your Mason address to ensure that I get your message. I will check my email at least daily, and I expect you to do the same, as does the university.

We will also be using Blackboard, which is now available via <http://mymason.gmu.edu>. Here is where I will post announcements, directions for the assignments, copies of class handouts, etc. This is also where you will find the required online readings in the schedule below. Please visit this site at least two to three times per week.

## **Attendance**

As stated above, attendance is mandatory. I am usually willing to overlook one unexcused absence, if you communicate the reason to me well ahead of time, but you will still be responsible for any material that you have missed. Please do not ask me about such material. Instead, check for handouts on Blackboard and consult with your classmates.

Unexcused absences are those for which you do not have either (1) written attestation from your doctor or clinic the next week or (2) attestation from your coach for a university-sanctioned competition, which you must give me before the event.

There will be a ten-minute break about halfway through each class, and I will make a note of anyone who does not return to class afterwards. Mandatory attendance means for the whole class, not just the first part. Leaving early will adversely impact your grade. So will coming to class late.

## **Classroom**

Taking notes with your laptop, netbook, tablet, etc. is okay, but multitasking on your computer or with other things is not. You are also expected to treat your classmates considerately, both by not distracting them in class with irrelevant conversations or other activities as well as by engaging them in a respectful manner in class discussions.

Whenever I show film footage, I will ask that all personal computing devices be turned off, because the light is distracting to others. During those times, any notes you take will have to be on paper, though you should be able to get by with writing down key thoughts afterwards, since we will talk about the material after viewing it.

Please try to restrict bathroom visits to the ten-minute break, so that you do not disturb your neighbors. If you wish to make any phone calls during the break, please take those out in the hallway.

## Honor System

Academic honesty is essential not only to the success of the course, but also to your academic and professional careers. Hence, you are expected to know what plagiarism is and abide by all other aspects of the GMU Honor System and Code, too. See <http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html> for details. If you are at all unclear about what plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are, please talk to me.

The midterm and final are “blue book” exams. You must purchase blue books for them at the bookstore and bring them to class completely empty. Any writing in the blue books from prior to the exam and any missing pages can be construed as an honor code violation; bring clean, blank copies, and do not tear any pages out during the exams.

## Special Accommodations

Students requiring an academic accommodation should see me immediately and also contact the Office of Disability Services at <http://ods.gmu.edu> or (703) 993-2474.

## Readings

There are six required books in this course, which you need to obtain in a timely manner, either at the bookstore or from an alternative source online.

- Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). [ ISBN-13: 9780521540711 ]  
*Buy the second edition of this title, not an earlier one, because much has changed.*
- Alfred Kelly, ed., *The German Worker: Working-Class Autobiographies from the Age of Industrialization* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987). [ ISBN-13: 9780520061248 ]
- Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914–1918*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004). [ ISBN-13: 9780521547802 ]  
*If you can buy the first edition of this title at a lower price, that is okay. The only changes I have noticed were to the cover and the bibliographical resources.*
- Detlev J. K. Peukert, *The Weimar Republic*, trans. Richard Deveson (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993). [ ISBN-13: 9780809015566 ]
- Robert G. Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2009). [ ISBN-13: 9780312454685 ]
- Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000). [ ISBN-13: 9780520211391 ]

In addition, there are primary source assignments from German History in Documents and Images (GHDI) at <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org>, a free online resource published by the German Historical Institute, Washington, DC.

## Schedule and Deadlines

Class meets on Tuesday evenings, 7:20–10:00 p.m., in the Nguyen Engineering Building 1107. The reading assignments in this schedule must be completed *before* the class under which they are listed. Come to class prepared to discuss them.

Please note that the paper deadlines are on two Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. in order to give you a little more wiggle room while still allowing time for the following week’s reading assignment. If that deadline is missed, late points will begin to accrue at up to five points per day.

The exam dates are firm. Only under the following rare circumstances would I allow a student to make up an exam: (1) If you have a school-sponsored competition that you can document, then you must do so

long before the exam, so that we can schedule yours. I will not accept any such documentation or excuse after the exam. (2) If you are ill or experience a medical emergency, you will be able to make up the exam, if you produce attestation from the doctor, clinic, or hospital just as soon as you are cleared to attend class again. (3) If you have more than two final exams scheduled on the same day, you need to talk to all of your professors to see which exam you might reschedule; do this early in the semester.

If the university cancels classes due to inclement weather, it will announce this cancellation on its home page, <http://www.gmu.edu>. If I have to cancel class because I am ill, I will post a notice on Blackboard and also send everyone an email. If class is cancelled for any reason, please check the course on Blackboard for instructions on how to make up the missed material.

08/30 (Tue.) INTRODUCTION

09/06 (Tue.) MEDIEVAL, EARLY MODERN, AND REVOLUTIONARY LEGACIES

- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, preface and chaps. 1–4.
- Optional: If you would like to learn more about any of these topics, a great place to start is GHDI (see link under “Readings” above), which offers a narrative history for each major time period as well as an assortment of primary sources, both documents and images.

09/13 (Tue.) FROM CONFEDERATION TO EMPIRE

- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, pp. 104–31.
- Required Reading: Selections from GHDI. See “Online Readings” folder on Blackboard.

09/20 (Tue.) GERMAN WORKERS

- Required Reading: Kelly, *German Worker*; according to the following instructions:
- We will divide Kelly’s long book among the class. Everyone will read pp. xiii and 1–96, and everyone will also look at the pictures that follow p. 229. In addition, group 1 will read pp. 97–203; group 2 will read 204–319; and group 3 will read pp. 320–427. I will email group assignments by Sept. 10. Of course, please feel free to read more of this book than is assigned, if you have time. The workers’ testimony is certainly worth the effort.

**09/24 (Sat.) FIRST SOURCE ANALYSIS PAPER**

- Paper is due via email by 9:00 a.m. Look for email confirmation that I have received and can open your file.
- I will post this assignment to Blackboard by Sept. 10.

09/27 (Tue.) IMPERIAL GERMANY

- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, pp. 131–54.
- Required Reading: Selections from GHDI. See “Online Readings” folder on Blackboard.

**10/04 (Tue.) MIDTERM EXAM**

- I will post details about this exam to Blackboard by Sept. 20.
- Remember to bring fresh blue books and extra writing implements to class.

10/11 (Tue.) NO TUESDAY CLASSES AT MASON THIS WEEK

- Mason is observing a special Columbus Day holiday schedule this week. There are no classes on Monday; regular Monday classes meet on Tuesday; and Tuesday classes do not meet.

10/18 (Tue.) IMPERIAL GERMANY AND THE GREAT WAR

- Required Reading: Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War* (whole book).

10/25 (Tue.) WEIMAR GERMANY (1)

- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, pp. 155–79.

- Unsolicited Advice: Next week’s required book is substantial, so you should try to do a good chunk of that reading this week already.
  - Optional: If you have extra time this week or next and you would like to see documents about specific aspects of the Weimar Republic, please visit GHDI. The introductory narrative for this section is not yet available, but plenty of documents and a few images have been posted. If you need help interpreting them, see the required readings for this week (Fulbrook), next week (Peukert), and even the week after (Moeller). Of course, you can also bring up questions and share your ideas in class.
- 11/01 (Tue.) WEIMAR GERMANY (2)
- Required Reading: Peukert, *Weimar Republic* (whole book).
  - Optional: See note about GHDI for class on Oct. 25, which also applies to today’s class.
- 11/08 (Tue.) NAZI GERMANY (1)
- Required Reading: Moeller, *Nazi State and German Society* (whole book).
- 11/12 (Sat.) SECOND SOURCE ANALYSIS PAPER**
- Paper is due via email by 9:00 a.m. Look for email confirmation that I have received and can open your file.
  - I will post this assignment to Blackboard by Oct. 29.
- 11/15 (Tue.) NAZI GERMANY (2)
- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, pp. 179–204.
  - Recommended Exhibit: Explore the propaganda exhibit at the Holocaust Museum, either in person or online at <http://www.ushmm.org/propaganda>.
  - Optional: If you would like to learn still more and have some time, you can visit the useful unit on Nazi Germany at GHDI.
- 11/22 (Tue.) TWO POSTWAR GERMANIES (1)
- Required Reading: *Poiger, Jazz, Rock, and Rebels* (whole book).
- 11/29 (Tue.) TWO POSTWAR GERMANIES (2)
- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, pp. 205–43.
  - Required Reading: Selections from GHDI. See “Online Readings” folder on Blackboard.
- 12/06 (Tue.) REUNIFICATION
- Required Reading: Fulbrook, *Concise History*, pp. 243–61.
  - Required Reading: Selections from GHDI. See “Online Readings” folder on Blackboard.
- 12/13 (Tue.) FINAL EXAM**
- The exam will be in our regular classroom; however the times shift slightly. It will be from 7:30 to 10:15 p.m.
  - Remember to bring fresh blue books and extra writing implements to class.