

The University of British Columbia Department of Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies

GERM 301 German Literature 1900-1945 (in English)

Term I Fall Session 2021

Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəýəm (Musqueam) people. The land upon which it is situated has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

COURSE INFORMATION

Title: German Literature 1900-1945 (in English)Code: GERM 301Section: 001Credit Value: 3Meeting Times:Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PMMeeting Location(s):BUCH-D301

CONTACT

Instructor:Dr. Elizabeth "Biz" NijdamE-Mail:biz.nijdam@ubc.caPhone #:778-697-6294Office Hours:Fridays 11am to 12pm PTVirtual Office Hours:by appointment

PREREQUISITES

This course provides an overview of the German literary and art historical epochs to occur between 1900 and 1945 **in English translation**. It therefore does not require any prior knowledge of the German language. This course will also introduce and cover the pertinent historical, political, and cultural contexts as they become relevant.

PREREQUISITES: None COREQUISITES: None

COURSE CONTENT & STRUCTURE

This class provides an overview of the literary and art historical epochs of German modernism, the interwar period, and WWII in English translation. We will explore the repercussions of WWI on German cultural production, read Dadaist sound poetry, and examine issues surrounding the New Woman of the Weimar era through literature, while contemplating the function of fairy tales in the interwar period and the role of exile in literary expression during WWII. Looking German culture, society, and politics simultaneously, this course looks at the artistic production of German Expressionism, Dada, and *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) alongside the literary works of Franz Kafka, Erich Maria Remarque, Irmgard Keun, Bertold Brecht, and Anna Seghers and the poetry of Else Lasker-Schüler, Gertrud Kolmar, and Mascha Kaléko.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course (i.e., with active attendance and participation and completion of reading and writing assignments as well as the group project), students will be individually and cooperatively able to:

- describe major events in German history during the first third of the twentieth century (ca. 1900-1945) and assess their impact on cultural and intellectual life
- discuss, analyze, and interpret representative texts from this period
- describe, discuss, and interpret written and visual materials using standard tools of literary and visual analysis
- recognize aspects of gender, sexuality, race, social standing, and religion in the periods and cultural products discussed
- respond concisely to thematic questions in clear and concise form.

GENERAL GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

Our classroom environment, whether it be virtual or in-person, should be an inclusive and welcoming learning space. To this end, students will be signing a set of Discussion Guidelines at the beginning of the semester in order to help foster the respectful community environment essential to learning. However, even without these explicit guidelines, the following classroom behaviour is expected of all members of this course:

- All questions, posts, and interventions should be respectful, thoughtful and pursued with care about the other students in the course.
- This course addresses some difficult topics that may upset students or trigger some painful memories. While I cannot know in advance what will be a trigger for someone, many of our texts include references to sensitive issues, such as racism and violence. Do not feel obliged to engage with triggering material. If for any reason whatsoever you feel engaging with a particular text might negatively impact your mental health, please email me at biz.nijdam@ubc.ca immediately or have someone you trust email me on your behalf, so that we make an alternative content arrangement. Moreover, I encourage all students to reach out for help in the event that they find the course material triggering.

- Respectful disagreement should be presented in a manner appropriate to intellectual inquiry, in a manner that respects all those involved, and at the appropriate time.
 - You can reach out to discuss some issues further.
 - You can take time to process something.
 - You should engage with other students, whose experience may be different, with care.
- Since this course was designed during the COVID-19 global pandemic, it takes advantage of some of digital teaching tools and processes available to courses delivered online. Moreover, in light of the continued uncertainty around new variants, some course sessions will have the option to be participated in remotely, though the classroom will still be available for students who will be on-campus during this time. These sessions will likely include guest speakers' presentations, workshops, and webinars as well as film screenings, but they might also include other kinds of class sessions.
- Students are expected to attend these sessions, which will generally be held during normal course hours. For those students who cannot attend, permission will be asked to the guest speakers to record the sessions and to make them available online.
- **Email policy:** I respond to emails usually within 24 hours. If you email me very late at night, over the week, or on a holiday, I may not respond until the next working day. For emergency situations, please feel free to text me at 778-697-6294.

COVID-19 Safety

Provincial Health Orders and UBC policy now mandate masks in all indoor public spaces on campus. These spaces include classrooms, residence halls, libraries, and common areas. **You are thus required to wear a non-medical mask during our class meetings, for your own protection and for the safety and comfort of everyone else in the class.** For our in-person meetings in this class, it is important that all of us feel as comfortable as possible engaging in class activities while sharing an indoor space. Non-medical masks that cover our noses and mouths are a primary tool for combating the spread of Covid-19. Further, according to the provincial mandate, masks are required in all indoor public spaces including lobbies, hallways, stairwells, elevators, and labs. There may be students who have medical accommodations for not wearing a mask. Please maintain a respectful environment. UBC Respectful Environment Statement.

Students who wish to request an exemption to the indoor mask mandate must do so based on one of the grounds for exemption detailed in <u>the PHO Order on Face Coverings (COVID-19</u>). Such requests must be made through the Center for Accessibility (Vancouver campus).

After review, students that are approved for this accommodation will be provided with a letter of accommodation to share with faculty members teaching courses in which they are registered. In the intervening time, these students are welcome in the class.

Mask wearing protects you as well as others in your environment. Let's do everything we can as a community to stop the spread of this virus.

If you are sick, it is important that you stay home. Complete a self-assessment for Covid-19 symptoms here: <u>https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en</u>. In this class, the marking scheme is intended to provide flexibility so that you can prioritize your health and still succeed.

If you miss class because of illness:

- Make a connection early in the term to another student or a group of students in the class. You can help each other by sharing notes. If you don't yet know anyone in the class, post on the Discussion Forum on Canvas to connect with other students.
- Consult the class resources on Canvas.
- Use the Discussion Forum on Canvas for help.
- Attend Virtual Office Hours (by appointment).
- If you are concerned that you will miss a key activity due to illness, please contact me at biz.nijdam@ubc.ca to discuss.

If I (the instructor) am feeling ill: If I am unwell, I will not come to class. I will make every reasonable attempt to communicate plans for class as soon as possible via Canvas. Our classroom will still be available for you to sit in and attend an online session.

In this instance, I may ask you to do an activity or read something in place of class time. However, if I am well enough to teach, but am taking precautions to avoid infecting others, we may hold the class online. If this happens, you will receive an announcement in Canvas informing you how to join the class.

LEARNING MATERIALS

All of our course readings will be available for purchase in the UBC Bookstore, posted on our Canvas site in excerpt or be available for purchase as books or eBooks via Amazon. Movies will be streamed online through UBC's Kanopy streaming video service for free or available for purchase through Google Play, Apple TV or Amazon. Disney fills are available through Disney's streaming service. Digital games will be available online for free or purchase for various platforms, including laptop and desktop computers as well as Android and iOS devices.

READING/COURSE MATERIAL (STREAMED FOR FREE OR AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE IN THE UBC BOOKSTORE/ONLINE)

- 1. *The Metamorphosis* (1915, pp. 97) by Franz Kafka, Susan Bernofsky, and David Cronenberg, Norton & Company, Incorporated, W. W.
- 2. The Artificial Silk Girl: A Novel (1932, read in excerpt) by Irmgard Keun, Other Press
- 3. The Seventh Cross (1942, read in excerpt) by Anna Seghers, The New York Review of Books
- 4. *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1939, read aloud in class) by Bertolt Brecht, Bloomsbury Publishing
- 5. Films will be required viewing outside of class. They are available for free on UBC's streaming services for free: Robert Wiene's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919)
- 6. The video game <u>*Through the Darkest of Times*</u> (2020) will be available for purchase on multiple platforms, including <u>Steam</u>, <u>Nintendo Switch</u>, <u>Playstation</u>, <u>Android</u>, and <u>iOS</u>.

Course materials are also available via the Library Online Course Reserves (LOCR) on Canvas Additional Readings and Excerpts will be posted on our course's Canvas site.

TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

Students will need access to the Internet and a laptop or desktop computer to complete their coursework. Please see <u>keeplearning.ubc.ca</u> for information on and support in online learning.

This course will not be using invigilation software. Webcam usage during virtual class sessions will be encouraged. **Virtual Office Hours (by appointment) will take place via Zoom.**

If you experience a blackout, downed Internet connection or outage, reduced bandwidth or some other unforeseeable technological issue, please contact me at <u>biz.nijdam@ubc.ca</u> immediately. Furthermore, if you have problems accessing course material for any reason, please let me know. In light of the unprecedented times in which we are teaching and learning, I am happy to accommodate students accordingly.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS*

Week 1: Course Introduction & Overview Weeks 2-4: German Expressionism in Art, Literature, & Film Weeks 5: Dada in Art & Literature Week 6: Bauhaus Week 7: Weimar Fairy Tales Week 8: *Neue Sachlichkeit*/New Objectivity in Art & Literature Week 9-12: Exile Art and Literature Week 13-14: Group Final Projects

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Coursework will include weekly readings and online and in-class class participation. Other coursework will feature low-stakes assignments that endeavor to mimic the art forms we examine. For example, students will follow Tristan Tzara's instructions in "How to Make a Dadaist Poem" as well as produce political critique through collage in conversation with the work of Hannah Höch. Then, for their Group Project, students will have in-class time to produce and perform brief modernized versions of Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* in groups, which they will adapt according to a contemporary political message.

Over the course of the semester, students will also write three short 750-1000-word (3-4 pages, doublespaced) essays on a course reading of their choosing. Supported by readings on writing practice and writing workshop, these short essays will encourage students to develop their critical thinking, writing, and peer review skills. At the end of the semester, students will select one of their three drafts to revise and expand into their **Final Essay**, a **Research-Based Revision** (2000 to 2500 words; 8-10 pages, double spaced) of one of their earlier short essays.

Grading:

Class Participation	15%
Short Essay 1 and Peer Review	10%
Short Essay 2 and Peer Review	10%

Short Essay 3 and Peer Review	10%
Adaptation of Mother Courage and Her Children Group Project	20%
Final Essay: Research-Based Revision	35%

<u>Contract Grading</u>: This class uses a grading contract <u>for **some** of its assignments</u>. This means that if you complete the assignment, you are guaranteed full marks. <u>These assignments include the following</u>:

Short Essay 1 and Peer Review	10%
Short Essay 2 and Peer Review	10%
Short Essay 3 and Peer Review	10%

Following the work of Jane Danielewicz and Peter Elbow (their article, "A Unilateral Grading Contract to Improve Learning and Teaching," is in the "Course Information" folder of the "Files" section of our Canvas site), I believe that a grading contract allows me to give more honest evaluative feedback, improves learning and teaching, and is a fuller representation of social-justice-oriented pedagogy in the classroom. Not all students have identical educational backgrounds, nor do they possess the same experience in scholarly writing in the Humanities. This is especially true for CENS and GERM courses, which draw students from diverse academic disciplines and training.

A grading contract therefore allows students to produce their best work (on their own terms) and learn from their mistakes and inexperience, while striving to meet their own individual learning goals. Furthermore, considering every student in our class is experiencing the COVID-19 global pandemic differently and with different degrees of stress, changes in employment status, caregiving responsibilities, emotional labor and/or anxiety, I want all of my students to feel like this course is prepared to meet them where they are at. I believe a grading contract is an inclusive pedagogical practice that more effectively supports the diversity of student experience we are facing today. This may be particularly true with regards to students with disabilities, international students, first-generation students, students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and students self-isolating alone or quarantined abroad. To this end, every assignment with a grading contract will receive full credit or no credit – you either participate or you don't, you either complete the homework or you don't, you either submit your Short Essay and perform the Peer Review or you don't.

That said, if you need to submit work late, please email me in advance. I am always glad to accommodate students in extenuating circumstances, and I firmly believe that students should take care of their own mental health and well-being above all else.

<u>Attendance and Participation</u>: In accordance with UBC Policies and Regulations, students are expected to attend class regularly. Those students who are unavoidably absent from online class discussions or miss multiple class sessions of in-class assignments must report their absence to me immediately or upon their return to participating in our class. Students may be granted concession for their absence either by me or, in the case of an extended absence, by the Academic Advising Services of the Faculty of Arts.

Good participation will take the form of **regular contributions to class discussion both online and in-person** and the **completion of the in-class and take-home assignments,** including the **three Short Essays** and **the Research-Based Revision**.

<u>Readings</u>: Our texts will be available free purchase at the UBC Bookstore, online via our course's Canvas Site, on reserve at the UBC Library, or for purchase through Amazon as books or eBooks. Course texts, excerpts, and supplementary readings will be posted the Friday in advance of class in the "Modules" section of our course's Canvas site.

Handing in Homework: I will only accept homework posted online or submitted through our course's Canvas site. Homework submitted by email or Google Drive will not be accepted unless previously discussed with me.

Short Essays and Peer Review (10% each): Over the course of the semester, students will write three Short Essays (750 to 1000 words; 3 to 4 pages, double-spaced) and perform three peer reviews of their peer's Short Essays. Supported by readings on writing practice and workshop, these essays and the peer review process will encourage students to develop their skills of critical thinking, literary analysis, writing, and peer review.

Short Essays will primarily feature close readings of the text(s) under investigation, though the Short Essays themselves may take the form of a variety of kinds of academic essays, including comparative analysis, argumentative, or analytical essays. Students are, however, encouraged to use no more than two secondary sources in drafting their Short Essays, with the thesis relying heavily on the student's own interpretations of the text(s) in the context of our course and class discussion. **Please use Chicago or MLA styles for citations and bibliography.**

After completing their essays, students will submit them via Canvas by 11:59PM PT on their due date. Each student will then be assigned another student's Short Essay via Canvas to anonymously peer review, a process that they will complete by the end of the following Friday (11:59PM PT).

Each student will thus write one Short Essay and peer review one Short Essay **three times** over the course of the semester, using the feedback they received on **one of these Short Essays** to form the foundation of their **Final Essay**, a **Research-Based Revision**, which they will turn in at the conclusion of the semester.

Final Essay: Research-Based Revision (35%): For the **Final Essay**, students will select one of their three Short Essays and revise it based on the peer review feedback they received earlier in the semester. Incorporating more secondary literature (five to seven sources), this **Research-Based Revision** (2000 to 2500 words; 8 to 10 pages, double spaced) will explore the topic of the Short Essay in greater depth and with greater academic rigour.

During the revision process, students will perform thorough research of multiple sources, with the full analysis of their findings forming the foundation of their Final Essay. Here, students will seek to draw out connections between the interpretation they pursued in their Short Essay and the information they discovered as a result of further contemplation, peer review, and additional research. Sources should then be used as evidence to support, contradict, or expand student ideas, with Final Essays incorporating extensive analysis of the question, problem or theme the student began to explore in their Short Essay.

Please use Chicago or MLA styles for citations and bibliography.

Adaptation of Mother Courage and Her Children Group Project (20%): At the end of the semester, students will produce a short adaptation of Mother Courage and Her Children to the contemporary moment in groups, reconceptualizing the "moral of the story" in light of important themes, issues, and problems facing society today. By incorporating a political, social, economic, or cultural critique into the core of their adaptation, students will modernize Brecht's drama, shifting its narrative agenda to address something relevant to students' lives right now. Some potential themes include social justice and human rights issues, such as BLM, Every Child Matters or forced migration, environmental issues, such as climate change or natural resource extraction, and political themes.

The Group Projects can take any form, but it should (if applicable) be fact-based, grounded in scholarly research (only to ensure accuracy; this doesn't need to be a research-based project), and modelled after Brecht's dramatic intervention. Options include a **750-to1000-word literary text**, a **500-to-750-word play**, a **3-to-5-page comic book**, a **5-to-7-minute media text or series of media texts (such as a short film**, podcast, vlog, or series of TikToks), a short digital game or interactive narrative, **5 to 7 atemporal media texts (such as GIFS, memes, an Instagram account & posts)**, or a larger creative project using traditional or mixed media formats. These final projects will be put on display in an Omeka virtual exhibition space and screened/performed in class.

Assessment Policies

In accordance with University regulations, cheating and plagiarism is subject to disciplinary action. Students must write, correct and/or revise all their assignments independently; that is, with no assistance of any kind from another person.

Assignments are to be submitted on the original due date. Where travel for recognized University activities conflicts with assignment due dates, authorization must be obtained from the University official responsible for the activity. In accordance with UBC policy, students who wish to observe a religious holiday must notify their instructor two weeks in advance of the religious holiday they wish to observe.

If you miss marked coursework for the first time (assignment, participation in class, etc.) and the course is still in-progress, immediately submit a <u>Student Self-Declaration</u> to me, so that your in-term concession case can be evaluated. If you are not requesting concession for the first time or if classes are over, fill out an Arts Academic Advising's <u>online academic concession form</u> immediately, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case. If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult <u>your Faculty's webpage on academic concession</u> and then contact me when appropriate.

Supporting student learning and success is a priority for me. If there is a concern about a student's progress or well-being, I reserve the option of submitting an *Early Alert Concern*: <u>http://earlyalert.ubc.ca</u>

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE: Fall Session 2021 Term I (M/W/F)*

Session

Topic & Primary Texts

Assignments

Week 1: Course Introduction & Overview

Wednesday, September 8: Course Introduction Friday, September 10: Introduction to German Literature

Week 2: German Expressionism (Art)

Monday, September 13: "Unification and the Dream of World Power (1890—1914)," pp. 169-190 Wednesday, September 15: Introduction to German Expressionism in Art; Selected Artworks Friday, September 17: Selected Poems by Else Lasker-Schüler

Week 3: German Expressionism (Literature): Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis (1915) Monday, September 20: Kafka's The Metamorphosis (1915) Wednesday, September 22: Kafka's The Metamorphosis (1915) Friday, September 24: Kafka's The Metamorphosis (1915)

Week 4: German Expressionism (Film)

Monday, September 27: "The Great War and Its Aftermath (1914—1923)," pp. 191-124; Select Artworks Wednesday, September 29: Siegfried Krakauer's *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (1947) pp. 3-11

Thursday, September 30, 2021: Orange Shirt Day/National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: No Classes Friday, October 1: Robert Wiene's <u>The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari</u> (1919); Siegfried Krakauer's From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film (1947) pp. 61-76

Short Essay 1 (due Friday @ 11:59PM PT)

Week 5: Dada in Art & Literature

Monday, October 4: "Hugo Ball's "Dada Manifesto"; Tristan Tzara's "How to Make a Dadaist Poem" Wednesday, October 6: Selected Artwork by Hannah Höch; Degenerate Art Exhibition (1937) Friday, October 8 (Asynchronous): Art Project

Peer Review (due Friday @ 11:59PM PT)

Week 6: The Bauhaus

Monday, October 11 (Thanksgiving Monday) Wednesday, October 13: Bauhaus Friday, October 15: *The Triadic Ballet* (1922)

Week 7: Weimar Fairy Tales

Monday, October 18: "Weimar: Brief Glory and Decline (1924—1933)," pp. 215-244

Wednesday, October 20: "Little Red Cap" by The Brothers Grimm; "Kuttel Daddeldu Tells His Children the Fairy Tale About Little Red Cap" (1923) by Joachim Ringelnatz; "The Boy Who Wanted to Fight with a Dragon" (1921) by Berta Lask

Friday, October 22: "The Fence" (1924) and "The Servant" (1923) by Hermynia Zur Mühlen

Week: 8: Neue Sachlichkeit: Irmgard Keun's The Artificial Silk Girl (1932)

Monday, October 25: Keun's *The Artificial Silk Girl* (1932), excerpt Wednesday, October 27: Keun's *The Artificial Silk Girl* (1932), excerpt Friday, October 29: Keun's *The Artificial Silk Girl* (1932), excerpt

Short Essay 2 (due Friday @ 11:59PM PT)

Week 9: Exile Art and Literature

Monday, November 1: "German Megalomania (1933—1942)," pp. 245-276 Wednesday, November 3: Introduction to Exile Art and Literature; Selected Artworks; Poetry by Mascha Kaléko and Gertrud Kolmar

Friday, November 5 (Asynchronous): Introduction to Game Studies; <u>Through the Darkest of Times</u> (2020)

Peer Review (due Friday @ 11:59PM PT)

Week 10: Game Studies & Through the Darkest of Times (2020) Monday, November 8: Through the Darkest of Times (2020) Wednesday, November 10: MIDTERM BREAK Friday, November 12: MIDTERM BREAK Week 11: Exile Art and Literature: Anna Seghers' *The Seventh Cross* (1942) Monday, November 15: Seghers' *The Seventh Cross* (1942), excerpt Wednesday, November 17: Seghers' *The Seventh Cross* (1942), excerpt Friday, November 19: Seghers' *The Seventh Cross* (1942), excerpt

Week 12: Exile Art and Literature: Bertolt Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children (1939) Monday, November 22: Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children (1939), read aloud in class Wednesday, November 24: Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children (1939), read aloud in class Friday, November 26: Brecht's Mother Courage and Her Children (1939), read aloud in class Short Essay 3 (due Friday @ 11:59PM PT)

Week 13: *Mother Courage and Her Children* (2021) Monday, November 29: Group Project (in class work) Wednesday, December 1: Group Project (in class work) Friday, December 3: Group Project (in class work)

Peer Review (due Friday @ 11:59PM PT)

Week 14: *Mother Courage and Her Children* (2021) Monday, December 6: Group Project Screenings, Performance or Presentation

Research-Based Revision due Friday, December 10th, 2021

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity, Essays and Homework: All work submitted must be **original** student work produced for this course, with proper quotation and citation of the contributions of others. Violations of academic integrity will be taken seriously.

Respectful Classroom Environment: Effective learning in this class really depends on all of us being comfortable interacting informally with each other about subjects that can sometimes get heated. That makes what is important in every college classroom especially important for us: that the virtual classroom should be a comfortable environment in which everyone feels welcome and respected. This means thinking about the things we say, not perpetuating stereotypes, and apologizing if we say something we didn't mean. It also means contacting me if something happens in our class discussions or on the Course Blog that makes you uncomfortable - or if you believe your own words or actions have made someone else in the class feel uncomfortable - so that we can talk about how to make things better. If in doubt, please say something – I will always be happy to hear from you.

To this end, students will be agreeing to a set of Discussion Guidelines to help guide our behavior during class discussion on and offline.

Gender and Gender Pronouns: One simple way to maintain an open and inclusive classroom environment is to be mindful and respectful of our classmates' gender identity and preferred pronouns for class discussion and speaking activities. If you identify outside the gender binary or have any other concerns about gender pronouns, I would be happy to meet with you to find a solution that empowers you to comfortably participate in class discussion. This will include planning for how best to communicate this solution to your classmates.

Students with Disabilities: I am committed to creating inclusive learning environments. Please notify me within the first week of class if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that inhibit your participation. If you are a student with a disability who will need accommodations in this course, please provide me with the appropriate documentation as soon as possible.

Student Parents: In the event that we go virtual for part of the semester, breastfeeding babies and children of all ages are welcome and may be visible on-screen during class sessions/Virtual Office Hours. Students are encouraged to support and respect caregivers as they mute and/or turn off video and use the chat function as needed. Stepping away momentarily for childcare reasons is understandable and expected, and I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.

I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that may arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for a school-parenting balance.

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This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.