

POL 40995 and History 49295: Study Abroad
Modern Germany: Politics, History and Culture
Kent State University
Summer 2012

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Course Description.

Few countries are as important and controversial as the Federal Republic of Germany. It is a country that gave birth to the first system of social security and national health care. Between the First and Second World War, Germany's Weimar Republic was arguably the most democratic regime in the history of Europe. Yet, after the fall of the short-lived Weimar Republic, Germany developed one of the most brutal and undemocratic regimes in the history of the world. After the Second World War, West Germany became a model of a capitalist democracy while its eastern counterpart suffered under communist rule for nearly fifty years. Following unification in 1989, Germany became an economic success story and a leader among countries promoting greater European unification. At the same time Germany has come under attack for the country's heavy-handedness and arrogance in handling the current economic and currency crisis. So is Germany an exemplar of democratic stability or a country on the cusp of another crisis? How could a country that gave the world Weimar and Goethe also give us Auschwitz? Where is Germany today and where will it be in the future? These are the questions taken up in this course.

Students will have an opportunity to examine these questions up close and personal by traveling to Germany and visiting the three locations that are the center of Germany's past, present and future: Frankfurt (headquarters of the European Central Bank); Erfurt/Weimar (birthplace of German democracy); and Berlin (capital of the united Germany). We will use history and political science to examine the volatile political transformations in Germany from the founding of the first united Germany in 1871 to the Second World War to the Cold War to the present, and the contests between democracy, fascism, and communism.

Day	City	Activities and Class Meetings
W 5-16	From Cleveland to Frankfurt	<u>Evening:</u> Arrive with passport, course materials, and luggage
R 5-17	Arrival in Frankfurt	<p><u>Morning:</u> Arrival in hotel</p> <p>“Introduction to Frankfurt”</p> <p><u>Evening:</u> Upon arrival, we will take a charter bus to the Hotel. If time permits, we will explore our neighborhood and take a walk through downtown historic area and die Zeil, Frankfurt’s shopping area.</p>
F 5-18	Frankfurt	<p>Germany and its democratic roots</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Tour of St. Pauls Church, the cradle of Germany democratic foundation.</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Tour of the Römer, Frankfurt's town hall followed by briefing with local representatives of the Green Party.</p>
Sat 5-19	Frankfurt	<p>Historic Perspectives on Germany</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Frankfurt's Museum of History</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Boat trip along the Rhein.</p>
Sun 5-20	Wiesbaden	<p>State Government in Germany</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Train trip to Wiesbaden, the capital of the State of Hesse. Attend a session of state parliament.</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Briefing with representative of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU).</p> <p><u>Evening:</u> Frankfurt Opera House</p>
M 5-21	Frankfurt	<p>European Economic Crisis</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> European Central Bank. Briefing on “Germany and the Financial Crisis” at the European Central Bank.</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Free time</p>
T 5-22	Travel from Frankfurt to Erfurt	<p>“Germany Between the Wars”</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Travel from Frankfurt to Erfurt, Germany by train</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Walking tour of Erfurt</p>

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W 5-23	Erfurt/Weimar	<p>“Jewish Life in Erfurt”</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Small Synagogue housed the Jewish community of Erfurt from 1840 – 1884</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Tour of Petersberg Citadel and passageways beneath the ancient fortress.</p> <p><u>Evening:</u> Outdoor Concert</p>
R 5-24	Weimar/ Buchenwald	<p>“The Worst and the Best of Germany”</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Guided tour of Buchenwald, the concentration camp.</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Visit to Weimar, birthplace of modern German democracy</p>
F 5-25	Travel from Erfurt to Berlin	<p>Morning: Travel to Berlin</p> <p>“Introduction to Berlin”</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> After we check-in at the hotel, we will explore our neighborhood, get an orientation of the U-Bahn/S-Bahn system, and then take a walking tour of the Brandenburg Gate, Holocaust Memorial; Reichstag/Unter den Linden; Sony Center at Potsdamer Platz.</p>
Sat 5-26	Berlin	<p>“Democracy to Dictatorship”</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> Jewish Museum; Topography of Terror</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Reichstag guided English tour and briefing with German member of parliament.</p>
Sun 5-27	Berlin	<p>“Dictatorship to Division”</p> <p><u>Morning:</u> “The Police and the Nazi Regime” exhibit at the German Historical Museum</p> <p><u>Afternoon:</u> Free time and possible biking tour through Berlin</p>

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M 5-28	Berlin	<p>“German Model of Capitalism revisited”</p> <p><u>Morning</u>: Briefing at the Social Science Research Foundation on the German Economic Model.</p> <p><u>Afternoon</u>: European Commission briefing and tour of the United States’ Embassy.</p>
T 5-29	Berlin	<p>“Journey to the East”</p> <p><u>Morning</u>: Hohenschönhausen Stasi Museum</p> <p><u>Afternoon</u>: Visit House of Ministries (Wilhelmstrasse/Leipziger Strasse); Marx-Engels-Forum; Fernsehturm TV Tower at Alexanderplatz</p>
W 5-30	Berlin	<p>“Divided Berlin”</p> <p><u>Morning</u>: Checkpoint Charlie Musuem</p> <p><u>Afternoon</u>: Free time including visits to Kaufhaus des Westens (KaDeWe) Department Store.</p>
R 5/31	Travel to Dresden	<p>“The Cultural Capital of Germany”</p> <p>After checking into our hotel we will visit the Frauenkirche, with walking tour through the Neumarkt square and other areas of historical preservation and urban renewal.</p>
F 6-1	Dresden	<p>“New Synagogue and Post War Reconstruction”</p> <p>Morning: Visit the New Synagogue and the Saxon State Opera as sites of postwar reconstruction, revealing the different approaches taken by the former communist Democratic Republic and the reintegrated Federal Republic.</p> <p>Afternoon: Tour the city including the Dresden Museum of Art.</p>
Sat 6-2	Dresden to Frankfurt	<p><u>Morning</u>: We will return to Frankfurt by train.</p> <p><u>Afternoon</u>: Final Group dinner</p>
Sun 6-3	From Frankfurt to Cleveland	