# GRMN 491 German Literature Since 1990

# Spring 2015

**Instructor Information**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2 – 4 pm, Thursdays 10 am – 12 pm or by Appointment

## Course Descpription

This course presents an overview of German-langugae literature from 1990 to the present with particular examination of issues pertaining to German reunification in 1990; historical and contemporary confrontations with political systems of National Socialism, communism, and consumer capitalism; negotations with new concepts of national and European identity in global context, and the role of personal stories in the midst of historical movements and change. The course readings are in English as are discussions and assignments.

## Learning Outcomes

Students will gain and apply skills in recognizing key characteristics and significant aspects of developments in German-language literature since 1990 through critical reading, discussion and writing involving the texts and figures featured in class. Students will be able to connect these developments to broader phenomena taking place during this time period in Central Europe and globally while also being able to identity particular aspects of style, content, and theme unique to individual writers.

## Required Textbooks

Hensel, Jana. *After the Wall. Confessions from an East German Childhood and the Life That Came Next.* Trans. Jefferson Chase. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004.

Hermann, Judith. *Summerhouse, Later. Stories.* Trans. Margot Bettauer Dembo. New York: HarperCollins, 2001.

Kehlmann, Daniel. *Measuring the World*. Trans. Carol Brown Janeway. New York: Vintage, 2006.

Müller, Herta. *The Land of Green Plums.* Trans. Michael Hofmann. New York: Metropolitan, 1996.

Schlink, Bernhard. *The Reader*. Trans. Carol Brown Janeway. New York: Vintage, 1998.

Sebald, W. G. *The Emigrants.* Trans. Michael Hulse. New York: New Directions, 1996.

Other texts available as in-class handouts.

## Course Calendar

Mo 1/26 Course Introduction

We 1/28 Peter Handke: Literary Scene from the 1960’s to 80’s

Fr 1/30 Peter Handke, *Once More for Thucydides* (*Noch einmal für Thukydides*) (1990)

Mo 2/2 Handke (cont’d)

We 2/4 W. G. Sebald, *The Emigrants* (*Die Ausgewanderten*) (1992)

Fr 2/6 Sebald (cont’d)

Mo 2/9 Sebald (cont’d)

We 2/11 Sebald (cont’d)

Fr 2/13 Sebald (cont’d)

Mo 2/16 Presidents Day (No Meeting)

We 2/18 Sebald (cont’d)

Fr 2/20 Günter Grass, *Novemberland* (1993)

Mo 2/23 Herta Müller, *The Land of Green Plums*, (*Herztier*)(1993)

We 2/25 Müller (cont’d)

Essay 1 due in class

Fr 2/27 Müller (cont’d)

Mo 3/2 Müller (cont’d)

We 3/4 Müller (cont’d)

Fr 3/6 Christa Wolf, “Parting from Phantoms” (“Auf dem Weg nach Tabou”) (1994)

Mo 3/9 Bernhard Schlink, *The Reader* (*Der Vorleser*) (1995)

We 3/11 Schlink (cont’d)

Essay 2 due in class

Fr 3/13 Schlink (cont’d)

Mo 3/16 Schlink (cont’d)

We 3/18 Judith Hermann, *Summerhouse, Later* (*Sommerhaus, Später*) (1998)

Fr 3/20 Hermann (cont’d)

Mo 3/23 Hermann (cont’d)

Essay 3 due in class

We 3/25 Hermann (cont’d)

Fr 3/27 Zafer Şenocak, *Perilous Kinship* (*Gefährliche Vewandschaft*) (1998)

Mo 3/30 – Fr 4/3 Spring Break (No Class Meetings)

Mo 4/6 Şenocak (cont’d)

We 4/8 Jana Hensel, *After the Wall* (*Zonenkinder*) (2002)

Fr 4/10 No Class Meeting

Mo 4/13 Hensel (cont’d)

Essay 4 due in class

We 4/15 Hensel (cont’d)

Fr 4/17 Hensel (cont’d)

Mo 4/20 Hans Magnus Enzensberger, “The Future of Luxury” (“Reminiszenzen an den Überfluß.

Der alte und der neue Luxus”) (1995),

“My Fifty-year Effort to Discover America” (1997)

We 4/22 Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *Lighter than Air* (*Leichter als Luft*) (2000): Selections,

A *History of Clouds* (*Die Geschichte der Wolken*) (2003): Selections

Fr 4/24 Daniel Kehlmann, *Measuring the World* (*Die Vermessung der Welt*) (2005)

Mo 4/27 Kehlmann (cont’d)

We 4/29 Kehlmann (cont’d)

Essay 5 due in class

Fr 5/1 Kehlmann (cont’d)

Mo 5/4 Kehlmann (cont’d)

We 5/6 Selected Post-Wall, Contemporary Poems

Fr 5/8 Course Review

Tu 5/12 3:20 – 5:20 pm Final Meeting: Final Project Presentations

Final Paper Project due in class

## Required Assignments

5 Essays (3 pages each in English or German, due dates indicated on course calendar)

Semester Oral Presentation on topic related to the course, individual dates to be determined

Course Project Research Paper (9 - 10 pages in English or German) on a topic related to the course other than that of your Semester Presentation

Oral Presentation on your Course Project Research Paper

Preparation for each course meeting and Active Participation in class discussion

## Course Guidelines and Policies

Please note the course guidelines and polices following below under the headings: “Student Conduct and Student Conduct Code,” “Attendance,” “Course Withdrawal,” “Disability Modifications,” “Assignment Expectations,” and “Grading.”

Additionally, please regard these requests regarding food, gum, beverages and electronic devices: Please chew gum and consume food or drink outside of class if possible. If you need to eat or drink in class, please do so in measure or speak with your instructor about a particular issue involving a need to eat or drink during class. Unless indicated as acceptable or suggested for a particular activity, please do not use electronic/personal communication devices in class. Unless approved to use for a class activity, place electronic/personal communication devices on a setting that will not interrupt class. Thanks.

**Student Conduct and Student Conduct Code:**

Recognize that it is the obligation of each the instructor as well as students to maintain a climate of consideration and respect for all those who participate in the course. A good deal of the course will involve the sharing of views and opinions on various topics. It is important that they are exchanged and discussed in a considerate, productive manner so that everyone has the chance to participate eagerly and fairly. Listening to what your peers have to say and to share is an important part of your learning experience. Please refer to the Student Conduct Code of the University as it pertains to your responsibility to respectful of your fellow students, abide by campus policies, and to hand in work and/or perform activities assigned to reflect your own work as indeed representing your own efforts and research with citations and references of others when necessary. The Code is available for review online at: <http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php>

**Attendance:**

It is expected that all students will attend class when the course meets. Except under unusual circumstances, if a student misses 4 class sessions during the semester, the final grade will be lowered by half a grade: A- becomes B+. Likewise, if a student misses more than 7 class sessions during the semester, the final grade will be lowered one whole grade: A becomes B, B becomes C, etc. Missing more than 12 sessions may be regarded as grounds for failing the course.

**Course Withdrawal:**

Your instructor follows general University guidelines and deadlines concerning course withdrawal. Those policies can be found online at: <http://www.umt.edu/uac/adddrop.php>

**Disability Modifications:**

This course offers equal opportunity in education for all participants, including those with documented physical and documented learning disabilities. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services for Students, please contact Disability Services for Students (DSS) in Lommasson Center, Room 154, or call 406-243-2243. The DSS website is: <http://www.umt.edu/dss/>

Your instructor will work with you and DSS to provide appropriate modifications. Please note that your instructor can only provide modifications if notified and that such modifications are made after an instructor has been given appropriate information and formal indication by the student and DSS.

### Assignment Expectations:

Please follow and adhere to directions given for course assignments. If directions are not clear, be sure to consult your instructor as soon as possible. Assignments are expected to be handed in on time for full credit and presentations to be given on agreed-upon dates between the instructor and student. Unless subject to special circumstances (documented illness, family emergency, university-related absence or travel, religious observation, or other possible reasons you may discuss with your instructor) or by agreement by your instructor beforehand otherwise, missed assignments will result in no credit for those assignments. Late writing assignments may be accepted for partial credit within one class session of the due date. The final draft of the research paper is to be handed in on May 12 during the class session that meets during Finals Week.

### Grading:

Your grade will be based on the following percentage breakdown:

Written Assignments: 5 Essays (5 x 40) 200 points (40%)

Semester Presentation 30 points (6%)

Course Research Project Paper 150 points (30%)

Course Research Project Presentation 30 points (6%)

Class Preparation and Participation 90 points (18%)

Total 500 points

Final Accumulative Course Grade:

465 – 500 points (93% - 100 %) = A

450 – 464 points (90% - 92.9 %) = A-

435 – 449 points (87 % - 89.9%) = B+

415 – 434 points (83% - 86.9%) = B

400 – 414 points (80 % - 82.9%) = B-

385 – 399 points (77 % - 79.9 %) = C+

365 – 384 points (73% - 76.9 %) = C

350 – 364 points (70 % - 72.9%) = C-

335 – 349 points (67% - 69.9%) = D+

315 – 334 points (63 % - 66.9%) = D

300 – 314 points (60% - 62.9%) = D-

299 points or lower (59.9% or lower) = F