

**PLEASE NOTE THAT CHANGES AND ADJUSTMENTS MIGHT BE MADE TO THIS SYLLABUS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER**

Professor Karin Bauer, 680 Sherbrooke, room 485; [karin.bauer@mcgill.ca](mailto:karin.bauer@mcgill.ca)  
Office hours: T 1-2pm and by appointment

**GERM 260 Introduction to German Literature 2**

This course offers an introduction to major themes, authors, genres, periods, and movements of German-language literature from the 19th century to the present. Our analyses will take into account the historical context within which the literary texts were written, paying close attention to the social, political, and artistic transformations taking place at the time. To enrich our understanding of the literary texts, we will consider art works, films, and other artefacts of and about the periods and movements we study. While sharpening analytical, critical, and interpretive skills, the goal is to gain a thorough understanding of significant works of German-language literature (in translation) and of the cultural, ideological, aesthetic, and philosophical currents that gave rise to them. We will engage in the practice of close reading and textual analysis, taking into consideration narrative theory and various approaches to literary analysis.

**Required Texts:**

Available at the McGill bookstore:

Herta Müller, *The Passport*; Jenny Erpenbeck, *Visitation*; Abbas Khadir, *A Slap in the Face*  
All other texts are available on myCourses

January 4: Introduction to the course; Romanticism -- Caspar David Friedrich

January 9-11

**Reason and Imagination I: Romantic World Views and Experiences**

T: Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm: "Little Red Riding Hood" myc

Th: Ludwig Tieck: "Fair Eckbert" (1796) myc

January 16-18

**Reason and Imagination II: Madness and Rebellion**

T: Georg Büchner, *Lenz* (1836) myc

Th: *Lenz* cont. myc

Friedrich Nietzsche: "Three Metamorphoses" myc

January 23-25

**Bourgeois Subjectivity I: Fin-de-Siecle Vienna—Gender and Jewishness**

T/Th: Arthur Schnitzler, *Frl Else* (1924) myc

January 30- February 1

**Alienated/Alienating Modernity: Asceticism, Performance, Publics**

T: Franz Kafka, "A Hunger Artist" (1922) myc

**Alienated/Alienating Post-Modernity: Postponements**

Th: Judith Hermann, "Summerhouse, later" (1998) myc

February 6-8

**The Weimar Republic and the Exuberant End of Democracy**

T: Thomas Mann, *Mario and the Magician* (1929) myc

Th: Weimar art and culture; analysis of scene from Tom Tykwer, *Babylon Berlin* (2017-22)

February 13-15

**War and the Epic Theatre**

Bertolt Brecht: *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1939) myc

February 20-22

**The Postwar Years I: The Economic Miracle**

Rainer Werner Fassbinder, *The Marriage of Maria Braun* (1979, 120min)

<https://mcgill.kanopy.com/video/marriage-maria-braun>

T: Discussion of film

**Culture After Auschwitz**

Th: Ingeborg Bachmann, "A Step Toward Gomorrah" (1966) myc

February 27-29:

**East/West: The Socialist Experiment**

T/Th: Christa Wolf, *They Divided the Sky* (1963)

<https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/book/22608>

break

March 12-14

**German Heimat and History**

Jenny Erpenbeck: *Visitation* (2018)

March 19-21

**Migration and Refuge I: From the Margins to the Nobel Prize**

Herta Müller, *The Passport* (1986)

March 26-28

**Colonial Dreams**

Werner Herzog: *Fitzcarraldo* (1982)

link tba

April 2-4

**Migration and Refuge II: 'The Culture of Welcome'**

Abbas Khadir: *A Slap in the Face* (2016)

April 9

Concluding discussion; discussion of exam

### **Required coursework:**

--**Preparation** is key to productive class meetings; this course requires a commitment to sustained work. First and foremost, you must read the texts carefully and in a timely fashion.

--**Attendance** is necessary for a positive learning outcome. Extended absences (more than 3) must be discussed with the instructor; documentation may be required.

--**Participation** is essential and is expected from everyone. Participation means to ask informed questions, make informed observations, and engage with the point of view of others with the aim to create an open and engaging thought forum. No silent observers, please. Media and technology users are distracting to other students and will be asked to leave the classroom.

--**Oral Presentation and Teamwork** (see below)

--**Short Essays** (see below)

--**Take Home exam** (see below)

### **Methods of Evaluation**

#### **Participation/Contributions to Discussion:**

By participating in the class discussions, you will hone your language and rhetorical skills; in online discussions (see myCourses discussion forum), you can practice your writing skills and engage in productive and collaborative digital interaction. To have a productive discussion, it is important to engage with the comments and questions of other students in class or online. Your grade will reflect the quantity and quality of your in-class and online contributions. To obtain a good grade, you must actively participate in class and group discussions and, at least once per week, engage in and post a discussion contribution on the online discussion forum.

in-class 15%      myCourses 10%

#### **Presentation and Discussion Prompts**

In teams of 3-4 members, you will be responsible for an oral presentation followed by prompting a discussion. Your presentation should be about 15 min (including discussion prompt). This will give you a chance to engage in collaborative work. You will be asked to submit the presentation at the latest 1 day before the date of your presentation on myCourses. The presentations should focus on the assigned topic and develop a point of view/an argument about the topic; do not repeat what was already discussed in class; biography of authors in briefest form possible or skip all together. Conduct research using scholarly sources accessible through the library. GradeSaver, Wikipedia, SparkNotes, and other such online sites are not scholarly sources. Provide a bibliography of sources at the end of the presentation -- you will be graded on the quality of research. In the discussion prompt, you should direct attention to an interesting, resonant, and/or troubling aspect of the text that you would like to discuss in class. A strong prompt will briefly outline and contextualize the issue to be discussed and point to a passage or aspect of the text that warrants further critical reflection; it will explain why the passage seems significant. It might refer to other texts we have read and offer a possible approach to resolving the issue. The goal is to open up an insightful discussion. Presentation topics will be posted on myCourses; you may indicate your preferences for a topic and partners, otherwise assignments are done at random by the instructor. You will be graded as a team; it is your responsibility to ensure equal distribution of labor. If problems arise in your collaboration, please discuss them with me asap. 20%

### **Written Literary Analysis**

You will be asked to submit 2 short literary analyses of 2 literary texts or 1 literary text and 1 film on our syllabus. The choice of texts or text and film is yours. Your analyses should be cogently written and argued; develop a line of argumentation and follow through with it in a concise and readable manner. Sources consulted must be documented. The goal is to analyze an aspect of a literary or visual text, showing off your interpretive and argumentative skills in writing. About 300-350 words each. Submit on myCourses. NO PDFs, please! Deadlines are: 1st analysis due February 29; 2nd analysis due April 9. 30%

### **Take home exam**

You will have a choice of 5 short and 1 essay questions. The questions will provide an opportunity to show what you have learned in the course, articulate your understanding of the texts and contexts, and flaunt your analytical and interpretive skills. You will have 48 consecutive hours at a date of your choice during the final exam period. 25%

### **SUBMIT ALL DOCUMENTS ON MYCOURSES IN WORD COMPATIBLE OR POWERPOINT. NO PDF!**

### **Academic Integrity**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/> for more information). *L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).*

### **Language**

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. *Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).*

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism includes copying from a book, newspaper, journal or any other printed source, as well as electronic resources such as the World Wide Web without the appropriate acknowledgement. According to this definition, plagiarism also includes using material created by another person and presenting it as your own (with or without their consent) and using a paper-writing "service" which offers to sell written papers for a fee. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Additional policies governing academic issues, which affect students, can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights. The Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities

is available at: <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/secretariat/Handbook-on-Student-Rights-and-responsibilities-2010.pdf>