

GER 33000 German Cinema, Spring 2026
Lecture & presentations TuTh 1-:30-11:20 am in SC239
Film screenings & discussions Wednesday 6:30-9:20 pm in SC 239

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Course description

This course – taught in English – examines German cinema from 1920 to the present. In addition to viewing and carefully studying films, we consider the historical, political, economic, and social backgrounds that shaped these works and their reception. The course includes multiple studies of cultural histories, basic cinematography, and film theory. All films shown are in German with English subtitles. Course participants majoring in German can write their papers in German or in English, as they prefer. Each week we see one film and have two shorter sessions for lectures, discussion, and student presentations.

Outcomes

Strong visual literacy and cinematography skills, learn how to read images and interpret film semiotics, improve your writing, speaking, and communication skills, provide excellent presentations, engage in group work and class discussions, professional film analyses and building an excellent portfolio in German Cinema that involves German, European, and world histories. This German Cinema course integrates aspects of Holocaust studies, knowledge about Austrian, German, and Swiss cultures, and contributes to research in multiculturalism, ekphrasis, multimedia debates, and global studies.

Course requirements

Expected is a sincere interest in the course material and regular open-minded friendly and attentive class attendance. Please do the readings as listed for homework and come to class on time & well prepared. Course objectives are knowledge about German film & history in context, basic concepts of cinematography and film theory, and communication & writing skills. Expected are regular active class attendance and student presentations with PowerPoint slides, 15 response papers based on films as screened in class, three Quizzes, one Take-Home Midterm and a Final Take-Home-Exam due last day of class this semester. No German language skills are needed but films are shown in German with English subtitles.

ONE Textbook is required (ordered at Vons):

Stephen Brockmann, *A Critical History of German Film*: New York: Camden House, 2010
(ISBN 97857113-468-4).

Recommended Reading: NOT required but useful for your research: Beate Allert, ed. *Comparative Cinema*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008 (ISBN 13-987-0-7734-5166-7).

Films may include these films in German (with English subtitles)

Murnau, *Destiny*; Fritz Lang, *Nosferatu: Symphony of Horror*; Fritz Lang, *Metropolis*; Wolfgang Staudte, *The Murderers are among us*; Bernhard Wicki, *The Bridge / Die Brücke*; Joachim Kunert, *The Second Track*; Tom Twyker, *Lola rennt / Run Lola Run*; Bernd Eichinger/Oliver Hirschbiegel, *Downfall*; Florian Henkel von Donnersmark, *The Lives of the Others*; Wolfgang Becker, *Good Bye Lenin*; Christian Petzold, *Barbara*; Yasemin Samdereli, *Almanya: Welcome to Germany*, Simon Verhoeven, *Willkommen bei den Hartmanns*; Fatih Akin, *Tschick*; Maria Schrader, *Ich bin dein Mensch / I'm your Man*.