

Syllabus – Potsdam’s History Academy (PHiA)

Dates	July 26 – August 6, 2021
Language	English
Contact hours	70
Days of class	Monday through Friday
Class times	Morning: 8:30 – 10:00 AM, 10:15 – 11:45 AM Afternoon: 12:30 – 2:00 PM, 2:15 – 3:45 PM Class times may be adapted for field trips (please see schedule for details).
ECTS	3
Content	<p>Potsdam’s History Academy covers the major events and themes of modern German history through the lens of one city: Potsdam – the capital of the federal state of Brandenburg.</p> <p>Focusing on the development of different aspects on a micro-historical level of one city over the 19th and 20th century, the program is able to reflect on macro-levels of modern German history at the same time. Therefore, the history of the city of Potsdam is a nexus to understand the history of Germany from the foundation of Bismarck’s empire in 1871 to the peaceful unification of the two post-war Germanys in 1990.</p> <p>We will engage with a variety of topics of modern German history, including nationalism and nation-building, dreams of colonial empires, the rise of mass politics and culture, Germany’s roles and experiences in two world wars, Nazi racism, the Shoah and a divided country in the Cold War, re-unification and politics/culture of memory.</p> <p>By focusing on the city of Potsdam, we will be able to explore how political and social relations become embedded in the urban landscape and how historical events leave their marks on the city’s physical and social spaces.</p> <p>Course-related field trips will provide a hands-on experience through visits and guided tours in both Potsdam and Berlin.</p>
Learning Objectives	<p>Upon successful completion of this program, participants will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an interdisciplinary understanding of Germany’s past, • engage in informed discussions of the major themes of modern German history, • critically analyze primary and secondary sources, • propose, organize, and construct a course journal and essay drawing on primary and secondary sources and reflecting the course content, course journal, field trips and readings.
Target Group	The program is open to students and participants from all disciplines. Prior knowledge in German and European history is not required.
Prerequisites	Very good command of spoken and written English (at least CEFR level B2).

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	Mandatory prior reading: <i>Fulbrook, Mary. A Concise History of Germany, 3rd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019, pp. 104-273.</i>
Assignments	<p>To pass the course successfully, participants are required to attend class regularly, to participate actively in discussions, and to submit the course journal and essay on time.</p> <p>Course Journal During the program, students will reflect on their learning experience and write into a course journal at least once a day. Writings should draw on class discussions, reflections on field trips, as well as the overall experience of being in Potsdam. The course journal will be graded on the level of engagement students show with the experience of being in the city and the sites we will visit, as well as their ability to connect our field trips with German history and course materials.</p> <p>Every student should bring their own favourite journal to Potsdam. It can be fancy or a plain composition book or notebook. Alternatively, students can also keep their journal digitally (e.g. journal in Moodle course, blog), making sure that the logistics are suitable (internet connection, availability and security, suitable platform).</p> <p>Essay (5-7 pages) The essay is due within two weeks after the last day of class. After the program, you will re-read your course journal and turn this material, along with any ideas it stimulates, into an essay that considers in a more systematic fashion some aspect of the summer school. You might also incorporate some amount of scholarly questions and materials we discussed, as well as references that relate to your reflections. The topic of the essay is up to you, but it must be a collection of connected and articulated thoughts and impressions.</p>
Grading	<p>The final grade will be based on the following assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class participation and discussion: 50% • Course journal: 20% • Essay: 30%
Instructors	<p>Dr. Olaf Glöckner (Moses Mendelssohn Center for European Jewish Studies) Dr. Roy Knocke (Lepsiushaus Potsdam)</p>
Date	Schedule*
Monday, July 26, 2021	<p>Orientation Meeting</p> <p>Lesson 1 Race and “Weltpolitik”: The Age of Imperialism 1878-1914 Germany’s development from the 1870s till WWI cannot be understood without the Age of Imperialism and its European Context. At the same time,</p>

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	<p>a German “Sonderweg” took shape, marked, among others, by authoritarianism, a lack of democracy, but immense economic boom. Also debates on “Race” and “World politics” took shape in a disturbing manner.</p>
<p>Tuesday, July 27, 2021</p>	<p>Lesson 2 World War I as a Catalyst of Change I 1914-1923 World War I changed public and individual life substantially, especially in Europe, and the repercussions on daily life in Germany have been dramatic. How did people and political forces react to the implosion of the “Kaiserreich”, what kind of alternatives and political new visions were on debate?</p> <p>Potsdam City Tour (1:00 – 4:00 PM)</p>
<p>Wednesday, July 28, 2021</p>	<p>Field trip 1 Lepsiushaus Potsdam with exhibition about the humanist Johannes Lepsius and the Armenian Genocide</p> <p>Lesson 3 Digression I: Prussia and the Political Idea of a German Nation From the early 19th century on, the idea of a German nation was hotly debated, but there was also the question on appropriate concepts, protagonists, and leading forces. Many hopes were addressed – rightly or wrongly – to Prussia and its elites, located in Potsdam and in Berlin.</p>
<p>Thursday, July 29, 2021</p>	<p>Lesson 4 Post-war Democratic Order 1923-1933 Late repercussions of World War I intensified social, economic, cultural and, especially political conflicts in the Republic of Weimar. The first German democracy appeared as a hopeful project, at the same time extremely vulnerable and shattered by a series of complete misjudgement of political constellations.</p> <p>Field trip 2 (12:30 – 4:15 PM) Potsdam as a city of Prussia in grand style</p>
<p>Friday, July 30, 2021</p>	<p>Lesson 5 Nazism and Modernity 1933-1939 The failure of the Republic of Weimar and the real impact of the Nazi dictatorship before 1933 had not been realized in huge parts of the German society for years, except by political opponents and “non-Aryan” minorities. How did the Nazi movement become so attractive and expand its power? In this context, we will also deal with the so called “Day of Potsdam” 1933, a right-wing coup of mass propaganda.</p>

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	<p>Lesson 6 World War II and the Holocaust 1939-1945 Nazi Germany was determined to establish a complete new (World) order, at least in Europe, by “successful” war of aggression (“Blitzkrieg”) – a concept which completely failed after some initial success. At the same time, Adolf Hitler had proclaimed a “War of Race”, planning and conducting a politics of annihilation especially in Eastern Europe. In particular, we will deal with the destruction and extermination of the European Jews by the Nazi Empire and its collaborators.</p>
<p>Saturday, July 31, 2021</p>	<p>Berlin City Tour (10:00 AM – 2:00 PM)</p>
<p>Monday, August 2, 2021</p>	<p>Lesson 7 Cold-War Politics and the Division of Germany, 1945-1961 After World War II the world’s post-war order was established during the Potsdam Conference at Cecilienhof Castle. Berlin, as divided city, and Potsdam, as a (East German) “frontier city” became the center of the Cold War in Germany and Europe. We will, in completion to Day 6 (Sightseeing) deepen knowledge on how the Cold War was affecting the life of both cities including distinctive sites, including the Soviet Secret Service Base “Military Town No. 7” in Potsdam and the Glienicke Bridge (the “Bridge of Spies”) between Potsdam and Berlin (West).</p> <p>Field trip 3 (12:30 – 4:15 PM) Cecilienhof Castle and the offices of Roosevelt/Truman, Churchill/Attlee and Stalin. On Prisons and walls. The Soviet Secret Service Base “Military Town No. 7” and the Glienicke Bridge</p>
<p>Tuesday, August 3, 2021</p>	<p>Lesson 8 From Division to Unification, 1961-1989/90 The years from 1961 till 1989/90 are marked as a deep rupture between the FRG (belonging to the Western world) and the GDR (belonging to the State Communist East Bloc), a period of time that still continues on having effects in unified Germany. We will especially focus on resistant milieus and oppositional groups in Potsdam trying to prevent the worst in the city of Potsdam that time.</p> <p>Lesson 9 Digression II: Jewish Life and Culture in Germany after 1989/1990 After the end of World War II and the Holocaust, nobody believed in a Jewish future in the “country of the offenders”. Though, some Jewish communities had been re-established and “survived” until the end of the Cold War. Due to an unexpected influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union since 1990, Jewish Life in Germany has consolidated and revitalized, at least partly. We will focus on contemporary Jewish communities, synagogues and cultural centers especially in Berlin.</p>

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<p>Wednesday, August 4, 2021</p>	<p>Academy Day Joint program for all summer school participants</p>
<p>Thursday, August 5, 2021</p>	<p>Field trip 4 (10:00 AM – 4:30 PM) Jewish Museum Berlin and Centrum Judaicum/New Synagogue</p>
<p>Friday, August 6, 2021</p>	<p>Lesson 10 German Histories – German Memories 1990-present In recent decades, politics of memory and commemoration have undergone an unforeseen upturn in Germany. The periods of the NS-dictatorship, of the “old” FRG, of the GDR, but also of eras before are explored and analysed under new aspects and questions. Critical questions are directed to former politics of interior, but also on foreign affairs. We scrutinize this trend regarding questions of a new collective German identity.</p> <p>Closing Session</p>

*Day-to-day schedule and field trips are subject to change.