

**Political Science 147D: German Politics**  
**Class Time: Mondays - Thursdays 4:10 to 5:50 PM**  
**Room: Bainer Hall 1060**

Instructor: Roi Zur  
Office: 568, Kerr Hall  
Office Hours: Monday 2:00 to 4:00 PM or by appointment  
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**Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to provide a basic understanding of contemporary German politics. This course surveys German politics since World War II, with emphasis on the following areas: Germany's constitutional arrangements; Germany before and after reunification; the party system; elections; and, the European Union. Students are encouraged to use the Internet to gather information and update their knowledge of the material beyond the assigned readings.

**Course Requirements**

1. Readings – Students are expected to read ALL the assigned readings before class (most of the reading are very short, do not worry!).
2. Class participation – Students are expected to attend all class meetings; lectures, reviews and discussions. Students are also expected to take an active part in class. Participation includes, but not limited to, answering surveys, discussing topics, prepare summaries of the readings, and present them in class.
3. Midterm examination – The midterm examination will take place in our regular class on Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. The midterm will be 35% of your final grade, and will include both multiple choice questions and a longer writing essay. The essay question will be heavily influenced by the readings. The best way to answer the essay question is to cover everything that answer the prompt, but include only relevant information for answering the prompt. Be sure to bring blue books.
4. Final Examination – The final is not cumulative, but the pre-midterm information is very useful for the final. The final worth 50% of the final grade. The final will have a similar structure to the midterm, but will include more questions. The final will take place in our regular class on the final day of class (Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>). Be sure to bring blue books.

**Reading Assignments**

As I recognize the high costs of higher education, all the assigned readings for this class are free and available on Canvas or via the links below. Please make sure that you read everything before class. When designing my lectures, I assume the information in the readings is known to the students.

## Course Grading

Course grades will be calculated in the following manner:

Midterm	35%
Class participation	15%
Final Exam	50%

Numerical grades are translated into letter grades as follow (I will not round final grades):

A+	97-100%
A	93-96.99%
A-	90-92.99%
B+	87-89.99%
B	83-86.99%
B-	80-82.99%
ETC.	

## A final point

Make-up midterm/final times will be given only in cases of illness or family emergency, and you must inform the instructor a whole week before the midterm/final. Furthermore, you must provide proof of illness. Absolutely no make-up midterms will be given if the student fails to contact the instructor before the midterm. Alternative times for the midterm/final will be only before the regular class time. Under no circumstances may you email the instructor the morning of the midterm/final and expect a makeup. You will get a zero for the midterm/final – absolutely no exceptions.

## Course Schedule

Day 1 (August 7<sup>th</sup>): Introduction – From the end of the war to two Germanys

Day 2 (August 8<sup>th</sup>): The German Basic Law and institutional design in West Germany

Readings:

- Limbach - How a constitution can safeguard democracy: The German Experience.
- The Basic Law of Germany (Skim through pages 13-25).

Day 3 (August 9<sup>th</sup>): Political Institutions I - The Bundestag

Readings:

- Facts: The Bundestag at a glance (read pages 4-5, 12-15, and 32-36).
- The Basic Law of Germany (Skim through pages 37-42).

Day 4 (August 10<sup>th</sup>): Political Institutions II - The Chancellor and cabinet

Readings:

- Facts: The Bundestag at a glance (read pages 12-15).
- The Basic Law of Germany (Skim through pages 43-45).

Day 5 (August 14<sup>th</sup>): Discussion

Day 6 (August 15<sup>th</sup>): Political Institutions III - The Bundesrat, the Landers, and the policy making process

Readings:

- Brunner and Debus (2008) “Between Programmatic Interests and Party Politics” (read pages 232-236 and the conclusion, skim through the rest of the paper).
- Facts: The Bundestag at a glance (read pages 8-11).
- Composition of the Bundesrat:  
[http://www.bundesrat.de/EN/organisation-en/stimmenverteilung-en/stimmenverteilung-en-node.html;jsessionid=37C68852C5382091B5D01830A64EC26F.1\\_cid382](http://www.bundesrat.de/EN/organisation-en/stimmenverteilung-en/stimmenverteilung-en-node.html;jsessionid=37C68852C5382091B5D01830A64EC26F.1_cid382)
- Members of the Bundesrat:  
[http://www.bundesrat.de/EN/organisation-en/mitglieder-en/mitglieder-en-node.html;jsessionid=37C68852C5382091B5D01830A64EC26F.1\\_cid382](http://www.bundesrat.de/EN/organisation-en/mitglieder-en/mitglieder-en-node.html;jsessionid=37C68852C5382091B5D01830A64EC26F.1_cid382)
- The Basic Law of Germany (Skim through pages 43-45).

Day 7 (August 16<sup>th</sup>): Germany before reunification

Readings:

- Dalton, *Politics in Germany*, Chapter 3.

Day 8 (August 17<sup>th</sup>): The Berlin Wall

Day 9 (August 21<sup>st</sup>): Discussion

Day 10 (August 22<sup>nd</sup>): The German reunification

Readings:

- Dalton, *Politics in Germany*, Chapter 4.

Day 11 (August 23<sup>rd</sup>): Germany after reunification

Day 12 (August 24<sup>th</sup>): Midterm Review

Day 13 (August 28<sup>th</sup>): Midterm

Day 14-16 (August 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>th</sup>): The party system and coalition building

Readings:

- Dalton, *Politics in Germany*, Chapter 8.
- Additional readings will be assigned later

Day 17-19 (September 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>): Elections and Mass-Elite linkages

Readings:

- Neundorff, Anja, and James Adams. 2016. “The Micro-Foundations of Party Competition and Issue Ownership: The Reciprocal Effects of Citizens’ Issue Salience and Party Attachments.” *British Journal of Political Science*: 1–22.
- Additional readings will be assigned later

Day 20 (September 11<sup>th</sup>): The EU and the Euro crisis

Readings:

- Blumer (2014) “Germany and the Eurozone Crisis: Between Hegemony and Domestic Politics.” *West European Politics*, 37:6, 1244-1263.

Day 21 (September 12<sup>th</sup>): Immigration and the refugee crisis

Readings:

- Christin Hess & Simon Green (2016) “Introduction: The Changing Politics and Policies of Migration in Germany.” *German Politics*. Vol. 25, Iss. 3.

Day 22 (September 13<sup>th</sup>): Conclusions and Final Review

Day 23 (September 14<sup>th</sup>): Final Exam