Course Content and Aims

This course guides students through a first exploration of the cultures of the German-speaking area of Europe. It has three interrelated objectives:

- first, to develop and improve participants’ skills in German-language conversation, reading, and writing;
- second, to introduce students to a broad variety of literary texts and other artefacts spanning centuries of German cultural history; and
- third, to introduce students to research skills necessary for the study of the cultural products of the German speaking countries.

The course is designed to open perspectives on German writing, the visual arts, and film. There will be weekly readings in German: predominantly short literary texts (or excerpts of longer ones), as well as examples of other kinds of writing such as essays, speeches, and travel writing.

During the course students will have the opportunity to interact with all the specialists in the German program at Western. This will be through guest lectures/seminars, in which the guest will introduce an aspect of her or his own particular area of academic interest. It is hoped too that one of the authors whose writing will be featured in the course will visit the course as a guest.

Course Structure and Methodology

This course is student-centred. Guided and supported by the instructor, students will develop a portfolio consisting of a variety of short assignments designed to improve writing and interpretative skills. Students will participate in in-class discussions and will complete two research projects on subjects proposed and presented in class, with the final project submitted in a written or multi-media format.

The course involves regular readings, and it is essential that students complete the prescribed readings before each week’s classes, so that they are able to participate fully in class discussions.
The language of instruction is German, and all readings and assignments will be in German. That said, students are free to ask questions in English and of course to meet during office hours in English.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the course, students are expected to have acquired:

- an introductory competence in literary analysis, especially in the interpretation of texts in different genres — including poetry, fiction, and drama and essay — of cultural products representative of different media, such as film and the visual arts;
- a basic ability to evaluate the meaning of cultural products and to present clear, persuasive, original arguments about them in classroom discussions and varying written formats;
- the ability to think critically and synthetically, supported by self-evaluation and peer-review; and
- improved German-language skills in reading comprehension, aural comprehension, oral expression, and written expression.

**Assessment**

- Participation and Discussion  20%
- Portfolio  40%
- 2 Research Projects  40%

The requirements for each of these categories will be described in full in the final course outline, available in January 2017.

**Course Materials**

Materials will be available in OWL, online, at the Film Resource Centre (AHB 1G19), or at Weldon Library.

The full schedule of readings, week by week, will be published in the final course outline.

*The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures Policies which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Modern Languages and Literatures courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures website at http://www.uwo.ca/modlang/undergraduate/policies.html. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.*