This course will present a survey of the history and the interpretations of the history of modern Germany from the time of the unification of the German states in 1871 to the reunification in October 1990. The course starts with the German unification in the 19th century, but we will emphasize political and social history of the 20th century. The course has a motor, or “problematic,” which sets its direction: We will seek an answer to the question, did the dramatic events of German history, Bismarck’s “blood and iron” politics, Kaiser Wilhelm II’s confrontational foreign policy before WWI, Hitler and the rise of the Nazis, World War II, and the Holocaust, all occur because the Germans are uniquely aggressive and racist? Or, conversely, is Germany essentially like other European countries, differing only in the “unfortunate accidents” (e.g., defeat in WWI, or, the extraordinary depth of the Great Depression in Germany) she lived through? Did Hitler, the Nazis and the Holocaust then occur for accidental reasons? Do events since 1945 support one or the other interpretation?

Each student will write two essays (4-6 pp. each), and a research paper (including submission of a first draft) on a topic of their own choosing (12-15 pp.). The final grade will be computed as follows: 2 essays= 40%; research paper= 40%; and class attendance and contributions to the discussions= 20%. Class attendance and contributions to the discussions will be important in calculating your final grade. As you see, it will not help you to cut class, or to come to class unprepared to contribute.

Readings (Available at The Macalester Bookstore (Lampert Building) and, in many cases, on reserve at the Macalester Library):
Volker Berghahn, Modern Germany. Society, Economy, and Politics in the Twentieth Century;
Peter Gay, Weimar Culture;
Ian Kershaw, The Hitler Myth;
Omer Bartov, Hitler’s Army;
Funder, Stasiland;
Konrad Jarausch, The Rush to German Unity.
Occasionally I will hand out hard copies of articles or chapters from other books.
Introduction. What is the Sonderweg Theory? Bismarck and the Unification of Germany. What forces/considerations were honored and omitted when the legal structure of the German empire was built?

Readings:


Feb. 1. a. Berghahn, Ch. 17 (hand-out);

Week 2. Feb. 4-8.

Readings:
Feb. 4. Berghahn, Modern Germany, Ch. 1.
Feb. 6. Berghahn, Imperial Germany, Ch. 6 (hand-out).
Feb. 8. Berghahn, Imperial Germany, Ch. 7 (hand-out).


Readings:
Feb. 11. McClelland, “Republics within the Empire,” in Dukes and Remak, eds., Another Germany (1988) (hand-out);
Feb. 15. Berghahn, Imperial Germany, Chs. 8-9 (hand-out);
FIRST TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE IN CLASS.

Germany and the Great War: The Role of Individuals and the Role of “Forces.”
Readings:

Feb. 20.   Berghahn, Modern Germany, Ch. 2.

Feb. 22.   Berghahn, Ch. 2 (continued).

The German Revolution of 1918-19. The Weimar Republic. Did the German past have a role in the formation of the political culture of the Weimar Republic?

Readings:
Feb. 25.   Berghahn, Modern Germany, Ch. 3.

Feb. 27.

Feb. 29.   Berghahn, Ch. 3 (continued).

The Weimar Republic. Failures and Achievements: Intellectuals; and Women in Weimar Germany.

Readings:
Mar. 3.   a. Gay, Weimar Culture;


Mar. 5.   a. Gay, Weimar Culture;


Mar. 7.   a. Gay, Weimar Culture;


Readings:
Mar, 10.   a. Review last parts of Berghahn, Modern Germany, Ch. 3;


SECOND TAKE-HOME ESSAY DUE IN CLASS


The Nazis and German Tradition. Tradition and the Structure of the Nazi State.
Readings:

Mar. 24. Kershaw, Ch. 2.
Mar. 26. Kershaw, Ch. 3.
Mar. 28. Kershaw, Ch. 4.

Week 10. Mar. 31-Apr. 4.
Nazis and World War II. Hitler Myth in WWII. Some Issues in German Society During WWII.
Readings:

Mar. 31. Kershaw, Ch. 5.
Apr. 2 a. von Saldern, "Victims or Perpetrators? Controversies about the Role of Women in the Nazi State," in Crew, ed., Nazism and German Society, pp. 141-165 (hand-out);

b. Kershaw, Ch. 6.
Apr. 4. Kershaw, Ch. 7.

Week 11. Apr. 7-11.
Nazis, the Wehrmacht, and World War II.
Readings:

Apr. 9. Bartov, Ch. 3-4.
Apr. 11. a. Bartov, Conclusion;

FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS.

GDR and DDR, Especially DDR. The *Sonderweg* and German Life after WWII.  
**Readings:**  
Apr. 18. Funder, Chs. 7-13.  

Week 13. Apr. 21-25.  
GDR and DDR: *Sonderweg* and German Life after WWII, Part II.  
**Readings:**  
Apr. 21. a. Berghahn, *Modern Germany*, Ch. 6;  
b. Funder, Chs. 14-20.  
Apr. 23. Funder, Chs. 21-28.  

The Reunification of the Germanies.  
**Readings:**  
Apr. 28. Jarausch, Part II.  
Apr. 30. Jarausch, Part III.  
May 2. Jarausch, Conclusion.  

May 5.  
Reunification of the Germanies and the Future.