

HC 434H (B): BERLIN AND THE URBAN EXPERIENCE
+
HC 434H (Q): THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

University of Oregon – Clark Honors College – Summer 2023

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Meeting times: MTWR 9:00-12:00, July 10 to August 3 at the Social Hub Berlin + *excursions*

Canvas: <https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/231330> (OXEU 488 #42750)

Course descriptions

In *Berlin and the Urban Experience (B)*, students will compare communist, totalitarian East Berlin with countercultural, multicultural West Berlin during the decades when the Berlin Wall divided them. We then turn to the city's dramatic modernization since German reunification and its role as the capital of Europe's largest and most powerful economy today. (*Satisfies CHC colloquium requirement in arts & letters, plus global perspectives.*)

Widening the lens, *The Quality of Life in the European Union (Q)* explores why many European cities and societies are ranked among the world's most livable, and boast some of the highest measures of human development, gender equality, economic competitiveness, and environmental sustainability found anywhere in the world, including the U.S. (*Satisfies CHC colloquium requirement in social sciences, plus global perspectives.*)

Objectives

Berlin and the Urban Experience (B)

- B1. Compare daily life in a dense European city with daily life in a typical U.S. city.
- B2. Contrast life in East Berlin and West Berlin during the decades when the Wall stood.
- B3. Analyze the physical, demographic, economic, and cultural changes brought to Berlin by German reunification.
- B4. Observe and discuss how Nazism, the Holocaust, and Communism are remembered in Berlin's monuments, museums, and public spaces.

The Quality of Life in the European Union (Q)

- Q1. Choose a social policy issue pertaining to the quality of life in contemporary Germany and/or Europe and produce an independent research project on it.
- Q2. Use maps and statistics to analyze the quality of life in general, aggregated ways.
- Q3. Use Berlin and its neighborhoods to explore the quality of life in specific, embodied ways.
- Q4. Analyze the role of democracy in improving the quality of life via policy and public culture.

Requirements

Assignment	Due date	B	Q
Virtual scavenger hunt	Jul. 3	10%	
Sample social policy topics (3)	Jul. 3		10%
“Pre-flection” diary	Jul. 3	15%	
Class participation (self-graded)	Ongoing	25%	25%
Annotated photojournal	Jul. 17	15%	
Neighborhood sociography	Jul. 24	10%	25%
Museum study	Jul. 31	25%	
Prospectus for policy project	Aug. 3		10%
Policy project	Aug. 25 – Sep. 15		30%
TOTAL		100%	100%

Logistics

Class sessions and excursions

- Mornings (9:00-12:00) are for class meetings at the Social Hub.
 - Mondays and Wednesdays are for Berlin and The Urban Experience (B).
 - Tuesdays and Thursdays are for The Quality of Life in the European Union (Q).
- Besides short lectures by me, expect a good deal of group work, class discussion, “clinics” on research techniques, excursion preparations, and solo time for you to work on assignments.
- Attendance is mandatory unless you’re ill or have an emergency. Contact me ASAP if so.
- Afternoons are either free or for excursions (which are required, normally departing at 1:00).
- Fridays are either free (weeks 1 and 4) or for excursions (weeks 2 and 3).

Homework

- All readings are on Canvas as PDFs *except* the two books for the pre-departure assignments.
- Assignment descriptions are on pp. 12-15 below; submit your work on Canvas.
- Please sign up at <https://bit.ly/3r1EEbW> for a **lunch or coffee with me** (in pairs).

Devices

- You will need a **laptop and a smartphone and should bring them both to morning classes.**
- This syllabus has **hyperlinks** for easy access to online resources, including excursion maps.
- Download these four (4) apps: WhatsApp, Google Maps, Google Translate, BVG Fahrinfo.

SCHEDULE

Pre-departure (6/18 – 7/8)

1. **Submit pre-departure assignments #1 - #3 on Canvas by Mon., July 3** (see pp. 9-11 below)
2. Attend pre-departure **Zoom meeting on Monday, July 3 from 12:00-1:00 PDT** at <https://uoregon.zoom.us/my/imcneely>. We will mainly discuss logistics, review the syllabus, and address any last-minute questions. I will record the Zoom for anyone who can't make it.

Week 1 (7/9 – 7/15)

Monday: Orientation (B)

Homework: pre-departure assignments #1 (virtual scavenger hunt) and #3 (“pre-flection” diary)

1. Lecture: Berlin and modern Germany in maps and photos
2. Groups: share personal goals (from diaries) and report out
3. Clinic: practicalities and getting around

Excursion (3:00pm): guided tour of Berlin Mitte; welcome dinner at [Restaurant Maximilians](#)

Tuesday: Germany as a model society (Q)

Homework: pre-departure assignment #2 (sample social policy topics)

1. Lecture: Cold War Europe, *die Wende*, and the European Union
2. Groups: form groups based on policy interests and share ideas/questions
3. Clinic: translating German using DeepL and Google Translate

Excursion (1:45pm): [walk to DDR Museum](#)

Wednesday: East Berlin behind the Wall (B)

Homework: Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*, 12-29

1. Lecture: DDR politics, economics, and society
2. Discussion: debrief on DDR Museum and the Ladd reading
3. Solo (or in groups): excursion prep for tomorrow using [Stasi Mediathek](#)

Excursion (1:00pm): [U-Bahn to Berlin Wall Memorial](#)

Thursday: Socialism as a way of life (Q)

Homework: Rubin, "Amnesiopolis" (40 pp.)

1. Lecture: twentieth-century ideologies and the quality of life
2. Discussion: *Plattenbau* architecture and the model socialist community
3. Solo (or in groups): work on annotated photojournal

Optional (12:00pm-2:00pm): walk down [Karl-Marx-Allee](#) (formerly [Stalinallee](#)), then to Boxhagener Platz for lunch on your own, then take [U-Bahn](#) to meet up at Stasi Museum

Excursion (1:45pm): [U-Bahn](#) to [Stasi Museum](#)

Week 2 (7/16 – 7/22)

Sunday: OPTIONAL excursion to Marzahn

- For those who are interested, Eli Rubin, author of *Amnesiopolis*, will give us a tour of Marzahn, the *Plattenbau* district about 40 minutes from the Social Hub. Details TBA.

Monday: West Berlin as a hothouse enclave (B)

Homework: **Annotated photojournal** due in class

1. Excerpts from documentary: *B-Movie: Lust & Sound in West-Berlin, 1979-1989* (2015)
2. Discussion and excursion prep: countercultural Berlin
3. Clinic: neighborhood sociography assignment

Excursion (1:00pm): [S-Bahn](#) to Charlottenburg for walk from Savignyplatz down [Ku'damm](#). Then take [U-Bahn](#) to Kreuzberg for walk around [SO36](#) and [Landwehr Canal](#).

Tuesday: European-American differences (Q)

Homework: Hill, *Europe's Promise*, 53-71

1. Lecture/discussion: the *Wirtschaftswunder* and the social market economy
2. Groups: Europe vs. the U.S.: the narcissism of minor differences?
3. Solo (or in groups): work on neighborhood sociography

Excursion: none, but consider scoping out neighborhoods for the assignment

Wednesday: Multicultural Berlin (B)

Homework: Hinze, *Turkish Berlin*, xvi-xix, 111-43 (skim 135-38)

1. Lecture: *Gastarbeiter* and *Multikulti*
2. In-class reading: integration policy in Neukölln
3. Discussion and excursion prep

Excursion (1:00pm): U-bahn to Neukölln for walk in Reuterkiez. *Optional:* then take U-Bahn for a walk around Bergmannkiez (in Kreuzberg) and end up at Biergarten near Viktoriapark.

Thursday: Living in close quarters through the ages (Q)

Homework: Nicholas, “The Morphology of the Urban Plan” (30 pp.); Dolgin, “Ashkenazi Jews”

1. Lecture: medieval cities (Prof. Lisa Wolverton)
2. Excursion prep for Erfurt including my recommendations
3. Solo (or in groups): work on neighborhood sociography

Excursion: none

Friday – Saturday: Overnight excursion to Erfurt

- Erfurt is a beautiful medieval city, well over a thousand years old, and about two hours away.
- We will leave Berlin early in the morning on Friday and return late afternoon on Saturday. We will spend Friday-Saturday night in the Hotel ibis Erfurt Altstadt.
- Activities will be planned for both days, with a guided tour on Friday afternoon, Saturday lunch at Kromer’s Restaurant, and free time for wandering and exploration.
- You’ll keep your same room in the Social Hub back in Berlin.

Week 3 (7/23 – 7/29)

Monday: The reunified city (B)

Homework: **Neighborhood sociography** due (*extensions granted until Wednesday*)

1. Lecture: *Ossis* and *Wessis*, 1990-2020
2. In-class reading: *Berlin Reader* and related articles
3. Discussion and excursion prep

Excursion (1:00pm): walk from Alexanderplatz to Unter den Linden then take U-Bahn to walk through Prenzlauer Berg and stroll on your own.

Tuesday: The European social model (Q)

Homework: Hill, *Europe's Promise*, 72-92, 125-54; Gornick and Hegewisch, "Gender, Employment, and Parenthood," 17-41

1. Lecture/discussion: social policy and the welfare state in Germany and the EU
2. Groups: human development dashboards
3. Discussion of group findings

Excursion: none (but consider visiting a museum for your museum study)

Wednesday: Gentrification, modernization, inequality (B)

Homework: (Re-)read your chosen article from Monday

1. Groups: mapping inequality and societal participation in Germany today
2. Discussion of group findings
3. Excursion prep for site visits in groups

Excursion: site visit for Thursday group discussions

Thursday: Researching the quality of life (Q)

Homework: coordinate your talking points with your group

1. Clinic: [researching](#) and analyzing your chosen policy question
2. Discussion: readings and yesterday's excursions
3. Solo (or in groups): work on museum study

Excursion: none

Friday: Excursion to Sachsenhausen

- We will leave in the morning for the one-hour train ride to the [Sachsenhausen concentration camp memorial and museum](#) (with guided tour), and return by early to mid-afternoon

Week 4 (7/30 – 8/5)

Monday: Historical Berlin: Nazism and the Holocaust (B)

Homework: **Museum study** due (*extensions granted until Wednesday*)

1. Lecture: *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*
2. Discussion: debrief on Sachsenhausen and museum studies
3. Solo (or in groups): plan excursion to find [Stolpersteine](#)

Excursion (1:00pm): [Stolpersteine](#) individually or in groups (possibly a [neighborhood walk](#))

Tuesday: European democracy (Q)

Homework: Hill, *Europe's Promise*, 239-57, Crepaz, *European Democracies* (~30 pp.)

1. Debrief on *Stolpersteine* excursion
2. Lecture/discussion: how parliamentary politics works
3. Solo (or in groups): work on prospectus for policy project

Excursion: none

Wednesday: Berlin as a global capital (B)

Homework: current news articles to be assigned

1. Lecture: peace, security, and prosperity in Germany and Europe today
2. Discussion of current events/open format TBD
3. Solo (or in groups): work on your policy projects

Excursion (2:30pm): guided tour of [Reichstag](#)

Thursday: Policy challenges for the decades ahead (Q)

Homework: **Prospectus for your policy project** due in class; re-read assignment #3 (diary)

1. Discussion: debrief on the last four weeks and on your personal goals
2. Poster session (laptop slideshows) on your policy projects

Excursion: none

Friday: Farewell dinner at [Paulaner im Spreebogen](#)

Bibliography

Books to purchase

Chloe Aridjis, *Book of Clouds* (New York: Black Cat, 2009). \$14.00 pbk, \$9.99 Kindle, or used.

John Kampfner, *Why the Germans Do it Better: Notes from a Grown-Up Country* (London: Atlantic Books, 2020). \$16.95 pbk, \$10.99 Kindle, or used.

NOTE: Buy and read these two books before you depart. You'll need them for pre-departure assignments #1 and #2. You do *not* need to bring these books to Berlin with you.

Readings to download

These are all posted on Canvas under [Files > READINGS](#), as well as in [a single ZIP file](#).

Markus **Crepez**, *European Democracies*, 9th edn. (London: Routledge, 2017), 5-18, 54-55, 66-69, 81-83, 89-93.

Elie **Dolgin**, "Ashkenazi Jews Have Become More Genetically Similar Over Time," *New York Times*, Nov. 30/Dec. 2, 2022.

Janet C. **Gornick** and Ariane **Hegewisch**, "Gender, Employment, and Parenthood: The Consequences of Work-Family Policies" in *Lessons from Europe? What Americans Can Learn from European Public Policies*, ed. R. Daniel Kelemen (Los Angeles: Sage, 2015), 17-41.

Steven **Hill**, *Europe's Promise: Why the European Way is the Best Hope in an Insecure Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 53-71, 72-92, 125-54, 239-57.

Annika Marlen **Hinze**, *Turkish Berlin: Integration Policy and Urban Space* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), xvi-xix, 111-43.

Brian **Ladd**, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 12-29.

David **Nicholas**, "The Morphology of the Urban Plan," in *Urban Europe 1100-1700* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 62-91.

Eli **Rubin**, "Amnesiopolis: From *Mietskaserne* to *Wohnungsbauserie 70* in East Berlin's Northeast," *Central European History* 47 (2014): 334-74.

Other readings

Other materials are posted on Canvas under [Files](#) and in particular [> IN-CLASS MATERIALS](#).

PRE-DEPARTURE WORK FOR CHC BERLIN 2023

I'd like you to read two easy books and complete three easy assignments in June. By doing some prep work, we can maximize the short four weeks we have together on site in Berlin. **Submit all work on Canvas (OXEU 488 #42750) by Monday, July 3.**

Books to buy and read before departure

Chloe Aridjis, *Book of Clouds*. (\$14.00 in paperback, \$9.99 on Kindle*, or even cheaper used).

John Kampfner, *Why the Germans Do it Better*. (\$16.95 in paperback, \$10.99 on Kindle*, or even cheaper used).

*Amazon Kindle is a free e-reader that you can download on your smartphone or iPad or use on your web browser (at read.amazon.com).

Note: you do not need to bring these books to Berlin.

Assignment #1: Virtual scavenger hunt in Berlin

Purpose:

Get to know Berlin by virtually visiting places featured in *Book of Clouds*, bookmarking those you'll want or need to visit in real life. (10% for HC 434H Berlin and *The Urban Experience*)

Instructions:

1. On your web browser, go to maps.google.com. Create a Google account if you don't have one already. *Note:* stay logged in to share bookmarks and searches across devices.
2. Get an overview of Berlin by playing around with the browser interface and its various features (searches, zooming, satellite vs. traffic layers, photos, reviews, etc.). *Note:* Google's "Street View" feature is way out of date for Berlin, but see #8 below.
3. Locate the following districts and figure out which used to be in East Berlin vs. West Berlin (or both):
 - a. Mitte
 - b. Friedrichshain
 - c. Kreuzberg
 - d. Schöneberg
 - e. Prenzlauer Berg
 - f. Marzahn
 - g. Charlottenburg
 - h. Tiergarten
 - i. Neukölln
 - j. Wedding
 - k. Spree River

4. Locate and bookmark the following places (use the “Save” button to make bookmarks).
 - a. The Social Hub Berlin (where you’ll be living)
 - b. Jannowitzbrücke transit station (the closest subway/light rail station)
 - c. Edeka supermarkets (two of them nearby)
 - d. Einkaufsbahnhof Berlin Alexanderplatz (for emergency shopping on Sundays)
 - e. Rossmann Drogeriemarkt, DM-Drogeriemarkt, and/or Alexa Apotheke (an *Apotheke* is a pharmacy; a *Drogerie* is a drugstore but without medicines)

5. Pick five places you might want to visit in different parts of town—your choice (museums, monuments, restaurants, bars, shopping, clubs, parks, whatever). Using the Google Map “Directions” feature, determine the best way to get to each one via public transportation (S-Bahn, U-Bahn, bus, tram, or just walking). Use the “Leave now” drop-down menu to set various departure times, and include one late-night trip. **Upload a screenshot of your favorite route and briefly explain why you want to go to that place.**

6. Read *Book of Clouds*. As you encounter the places below, find them, bookmark them, and explore them on Google Maps, then **upload a screenshot(s) to show your work.**
 - a. Brandenburg Gate
 - b. Alexanderplatz
 - c. TV Tower (Fernsehturm)
 - d. Wasserturm (water tower) in Prenzlauer Berg
 - e. Savignyplatz
 - f. Marzahner Promenade
 - g. Unter den Linden
 - h. Two other identifiable places of your choosing from the book

7. Choose one of these tasks (or do them all for fun) and **upload an explanation showing:**
 - a. where you think the book’s narrator lives and how you know
 - b. where you think the Gestapo bowling alley is and how you know
 - c. what an actual *Plattenbau* in the Marzahn district looks like and where you might go for shopping, entertainment, and recreation if you lived there

8. *Optional:* use the **Apple Maps** application on your phone or laptop for current real-life street-level views of any place you’re curious about. A binoculars icon takes you to the “Look Around” feature where you can spin your virtual head around.

9. Download Google Maps on your smartphone and log in using the same Google account. This way, everything you just did in your browser automatically syncs with your phone! While you’re at it, be sure you have **WhatsApp, Google Translate, and BVG Fahrinfo.**

10. As soon as you land in Berlin, **start snapping photos** of anything you find amusing, jarring, or unusual relative to what you’re used to in the United States. No detail is too small (e.g. toilet design!). You’ll use these for the “annotated photojournal” due week 2.

Assignment #2: Social policy in Germany and the EU

Purpose:

Begin thinking about topics for your independent research project, focused on a particular social policy issue treated differently in Europe than in the United States. (10% for HC 434H: *The Quality of Life in the European Union*)

Instructions:

1. Read *Why the Germans Do it Better*. Focus on chapters 3, 5, 6, and 7 (on, respectively, multiculturalism, economics, society, and the environment). Note that this book is written for a British audience, so skim over the parts about UK politics.
2. Pick three (3) topics that you might want to investigate for your independent research project due after your return in late summer. These topics might be covered by the book or simply be inspired by it—or by your own interests and imagination. But each topic should touch on an area of **social policy**, broadly conceived. A partial list of policy areas is given below. **Upload a 150-200 word description for each topic**, explaining why it's significant and how you might research it further.
 - a. labor unions/workers' rights
 - b. unemployment and poverty
 - c. health care
 - d. child/elder care
 - e. education
 - f. pensions & social insurance
 - g. taxation
 - h. public housing
 - i. urban planning/transportation
 - j. gender equality
 - k. LGBTQ rights
 - l. immigrants/immigration
 - m. climate change
 - n. energy & sustainability
 - o. science & technology
 - p. industrial policy
 - q. public services
 - r. culture and recreation
 - s. food and agriculture
 - t. crime, prisons, rehabilitation

Note: the full project will be due on August 25 (soft, i.e. recommended, deadline) or September 15 (hard, i.e. final, deadline—especially for those traveling after the courses are over).

Assignment #3: “Pre-flection” diary

Write an essay or—better yet—a series of diary entries spaced over a few weeks in which you describe what you hope to get out of this trip, academically and personally. It should be at least 1,000 words but can be as long as you like. Be as concrete as possible about whatever goals, plans, interests, hopes, worries, or insecurities you feel comfortable sharing. With the course syllabi and schedule at hand, identify specific experiences, lessons, or excursions that you imagine might help you with your goals, and briefly explain your choices. **Upload the whole thing by July 3**. Only I will read this, but you should be prepared to discuss it in general terms on the first day of class. (10% for HC 434H: *Berlin, The Urban Experience*).

OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

Class participation

Between each Friday and the following Monday, pull up the assignment on Canvas. In the text box provided, write a short 1-2 paragraph self-evaluation of your class participation for the preceding week. *Include excursions.* Make specific reference to syllabus objectives B1-B4 and Q1-Q4 and to the personal goals you articulated in your “pre-flection” diary.

In each entry, type “**GRADE: x** ” where x is a number between 0 and 4, using the rubric below. For grading purposes, treat both classes (B and Q) as one, even though your paragraph should treat them separately. I reserve the right to adjust your self-assigned grade up or down.

Rubric

4 = excellent: active involvement, thoughtful interventions, evidence of preparation, balance quality & quantity

3 = good: asking & answering questions, active in group work, attentive, regular comments (if not always deep), evidence of preparation,

2 = the minimum: rare & reluctant speaking, active in subgroups only, prepared (if not thoughtfully)

1 = below minimum: present but disengaged, waiting for others to answer, unprepared for class

0 = absent

Annotated photojournal

Upload ten (10) photos from your first few days in Berlin in a single DOC, DOCX, or PDF file posted on Canvas. For each photo, provide a title, the exact location, and a ± 50 -word caption.

Each photo should depict something that you find amusing, jarring, unusual, or otherwise telling relative to what you’re used to in the United States. No detail is too small (e.g. toilet design, food packaging); the more specific, the better. Avoid clichéd images (the Brandenburg Gate, the TV tower) unless you find some detail or perspective that the everyday tourist is unlikely to notice.

Use course objectives B1-B4 (on page 1 of the syllabus) to inform your selection of images and to help you in crafting your titles and captions. The titles and captions should explain the broader significance of the images.

You will be graded on the keenness of your observations and your engagement with the course objectives. Aesthetic composition may earn you extra points but is not required.

Neighborhood sociography

For this project, you will select a *Kiez* (Berlin slang for neighborhood) and document it from both statistical and experiential points of view. A *Kiez* is an unofficial designation, sometimes a subunit of an official locality (*Ortsteil*), which in turn is part of a borough (*Bezirk*, a.k.a. district).

1. Choose a *Bezirk*, an *Ortsteil*, and (if applicable) a *Kiez* that you find interesting. [Wikipedia](#) has a good overview, with further links under “[Boroughs](#)” and “[Localities](#).” I also encourage you to consult touristy, colorful [overviews of the boroughs](#) and this [partial list of Kieze](#).
2. Browse Google Maps on your chosen *Ortsteil* and/or *Kiez* for residences, shops, businesses, schools, churches, restaurants, transportation, government offices, parks, landmarks, attractions, and anything else a neighborhood resident would likely access on a regular basis.
3. Find statistics, facts, and figures on your chosen *Bezirk* and, if possible, *Ortsteil*. Wikipedia’s borough- and locality-level articles will get you started. You’ll also want to visit your [Bezirk’s official website](#) and turn on German to English translation. Under “About the district,” most of these websites have a “Figures and Facts” section with a lot of good information. You may have to dig around to find *Ortsteil*-level data (if available). Focus on:
 - a. use of physical space (residences, businesses, roads, parks, open space, etc.)
 - b. demographics (age breakdown, household size, immigrant groups by national origin, overall population growth or decline in recent years)
 - c. social stratification (income and wealth distribution, poverty and unemployment rates, secondary and higher education attainment)
 - d. economic activity (major employers and industries)
 - e. political complexion (i.e. [party representation](#) on district councils)
 - f. access to government services, broadband internet, health care, and amenities
 - g. environmental sustainability and ecological footprint
 - h. major historical or recent changes affecting the life of the locality or borough
 - i. special local initiatives spearheaded by borough or locality governments (e.g. multicultural integration, urban redevelopment, democratic participation)
4. Pick a residential address that looks like a decent place to live. You can use Google Maps’s Street View or, better yet, Apple Maps’s Look Around feature to see what it looks like.
5. Visit your *Kiez* and conduct the “15-minute city” test on your chosen residential address. That is, pretend you live there and see how many of the stores, services, and amenities you found previously are actually reachable in 15 minutes by foot or by public transportation.
6. Walk around, take photos, talk to some locals (if you dare!), and grab a coffee or a meal.
7. Write up your research, with your fellow classmates as the target readership. Include captioned photos that provide general orientation and depict forms of architecture and street layout typical for the neighborhood, plus anything you find notable or remarkable. As for the format and length, we will brainstorm ideas and set expectations collectively, in class.

Museum study

Choose a museum from the list on the next page—or another one, so long as you clear it with me first. Study its website, visit the museum in person, and take a few photos of its exterior and from its exhibits and collections (if allowed—check first!). *Note:* many museums are closed on Mondays (or sometimes other days), so check opening days and times in advance.

Research the history of the museum, what its purpose(s) has been since its founding, who it caters to (adults, children, tourists, scholars, etc.), who or what entity funds and supports it (whether public, private non-profit, or commercial/for-profit), and how and from whom/where it obtained its collections. Pay close attention to how these characteristics might have evolved over time, particularly in response to major regime changes in German history.

Ask yourself how well (or poorly), how sensitively (or carelessly), how deeply (or superficially), how seriously (or touristically), how engagingly (or boringly), and how inclusively (or narrowly) your chosen museum presents its subject. If there are any controversial aspects of its history—whether connected to the museum itself, as an institution, or to the people, events, artifacts, and/or subjects it is dedicated to—be sure to find out more. Specifically, investigate its relevance to or involvement with the history of Nazism, the Holocaust, communism, colonialism, or any other problematic aspect of German and European history.

Write up an analysis of what you have learned, engaging with the course objectives and especially B4, as appropriate to your selection. The format and length are up to you, but we will brainstorm ideas and set expectations collectively, in class.

Also: You may choose to compare two or more museums along some common theme or topic if you feel that one museum does not give you enough material, or if you simply want to do a more interesting version of the assignment.

Policy (independent research) project

The biggest requirement for the quality of life course is an independent research project on an aspect of German or European social policy, broadly conceived, that you get to choose. This can either be a descendant of one of the topics you explored in pre-departure assignment #2 or something completely different.

We will spend a number of class sessions developing topics and holding clinics on research methods. Here, you will build on skills you already will have developed in HC 301H. You will also write a 1-2 page prospectus during the last week of class and produce a PowerPoint-style slideshow for display on your laptop for a poster session on the very last Thursday.

After the course is over, you should complete and submit the full project by August 25 (recommended deadline) but no later than September 15 (final deadline). The format and length are up to you, but we will brainstorm ideas and set expectations collectively, in class.

Possibilities for museum study

Follow the links below to Berlin's very many museums and exhibits. *Scroll down to access museum websites directly* for opening times and other details. An *asterisk indicates museums especially well-suited to the assignment. Generally, history museums are preferable to art museums. Check with me first if you want to write about any museum that is *not* on this list.

History museums

- *[Documentation Centre for Displacement, Expulsion, Reconciliation](#)
- *[Topography of Terror](#) (Nazi/SS/Gestapo persecution)
- *[Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe](#)
- [Memorial to Soviet soldiers](#)
- [German Spy Museum](#)
- *[German Historical Museum](#)
- *[Jüdisches Museum](#) (Jewish museum)
- *[House of the Wannsee Conference](#) (where the Holocaust was planned)
- [Karlshorst](#) (German-Russian museum on the WW II eastern front)
- [Berlin Hohenschönhausen Memorial](#) (Stasi prison)
- [Cold War Museum](#)
- [Memorial to the German Resistance](#) (against Hitler)

Special topic museums

- [Schwules Museum](#) (world's first LGBTQ museum)
- [Deutsches Technikmuseum](#) (technology)
- [Museum for Communications Berlin](#)
- *[Werkbundarchiv - Museum of Things](#) (see [this review](#))
- [Berliner Unterwelten-Museum](#) (Berlin underworlds)
- [Berlin Story Bunker](#)
- [Bröhan Museum](#) (Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Functionalist design)
- [Computer Games Museum](#) (a stretch for the assignment, but potentially very fun)
- [Heimatemuseum Reinickendorf](#) (life in the 19th century)
- [Museum Neukölln](#) (focusing on multiculturalism and daily life in Neukölln)
- [T4 – Memorial for the Victims of the Nazi Euthanasia Programme](#)
- [Museum in der Kulturbrauerei](#) (daily life in the DDR)
- [Tränenpalast](#) (former border crossing, now with exhibition on daily life in divided Germany)
- [Museum for Photography](#) (special focus on [Helmut Newton](#))

Art museums

- [Museum-Insel](#) (multiple buildings and collections: [Altes Museum](#), [Neues Museum](#), [Alte Nationalgalerie](#), [Bode Museum](#), [Pergamon Museum](#))
- *[Humboldt Forum](#) (including [Ethnological Museum](#))
- *[Neue Nationalgalerie](#) (visit the [Philharmonie](#) and [Staatsbibliothek](#) while at the [Kulturforum](#))
- [Kunstgewerbemuseum](#) (Museum of Decorative Arts)