

LT329 The Writing Life

Seminar Leader: Andreas Martin Widmann
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Course Times: Monday and Wednesday, 17:30-19:00
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

This course is designed for students who are interested in the various and multiple intersections of literary studies, creative writing, and the publishing world. To find out how the literary scene works and develops in Berlin and elsewhere, we will examine lines of tradition and at current trends in German writing, both literary and other. Students will learn to engage with literature beyond the page by exploring questions such as: how do manuscripts get published and/or become books? What role do journals and magazines play, both corporate and independent, in the literary scene? How do writers make a living and what are the functions of literary awards, fellowships etc.? Where do the German and international literary communities interact? And how do writers and publishers respond to the challenges of the digital era? Areas to be covered by the reading material include translation, non-fiction, graphic novel, audiobooks and the book market. In addition to seminar discussions there will be field trips to literary institutions, publishing houses, magazines and events, such as readings and talks during the *internationales literaturfestival berlin* (ilb) in September. Guest speakers will include professionals from the world of publishing: editors, translators, journalists and writers.

NB: Reading material and discussions will be both in German and English; students should therefore have B1-B2 level competence of German.

Requirements

Students are required to come to class prepared and with the relevant materials and texts, as well as to take part in field-trips to places off-campus. This may involve allowing for extra-time to get back to BCB during the lunch break.

Participation consists in contributing productively to class discussion in a respectful manner, and in demonstrating a sound knowledge of the texts assigned.

A hardcopy of the Course Reader should be purchased. Some additional reading materials will be made available prior to classes dedicated to these texts and subjects. These texts should be printed for use in class. Please note that in seminars we will work with printed texts only. NO COMPUTERS, TABLETS OR PHONES should be used during in-person classes.

Please note that essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. If an extension for an essay is agreed, the essay must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

All assignment must be completed to pass the course.

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity (e.g. due to plagiarism) will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

Attendance

Please note that, in accordance with Bard attendance policy, attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than two absences (that is absences from two sessions of 90 minutes) in a semester may significantly affect the participation grade for the course.

For regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence please consult the Student Handbook.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FALL 2020: Some students might need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors will make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Syllabi for core and elective classes should note or refer to the following policy from the Student Handbook on the submission of essays:

Grade Breakdown

Participation: 35%

Midterm Essay (1000 words): 20%

Review of Literature (700 words): 10%

In-Class Presentation: 10%

Final Essay (1500 words): 25%

Schedule

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change. You are responsible throughout the semester for knowing what you have to do for each class.

Week 1: German Literature within Global Frameworks

Monday, August 31	Introduction Anke Biendarra: <i>Germans Going Global</i> , p. 1-16
Wednesday, September 2	Terry Eagleton: „What is Literature“ (Excerpts) [German text: Sandra Richter: <i>Eine Weltgeschichte der deutschsprachigen Literatur</i> (Excerpts)]

Week 2: What Is an Author?

Monday, September 7	Michel Foucault: „What Is an Author?“
Wednesday, September 9	Deleuze/Guattari: Kafka. Toward a Minor Literature, p. 16-27. Anke Biendarra: “Authorship: Changed Paradigms”, p. 23-35

Week 3: Literature as Spectacle

Monday, September 14	Field Trip: <i>internationales literaturfestival berlin</i> Please note: This event takes place in the evening.
Wednesday, September 16	Guy Debord: <i>The Society of the Spectacle</i> [German text: Andreas Maier: <i>Ich</i> (Excerpts)]

Week 4: The Workshop

Monday, September 21	Can Creative Writing Be Learned? Chad Harbach: „NYC vs. MFA“
Wednesday, September 23	Field trip to Literarisches Colloquium Berlin (tbc.) Alternatively: Joint Session Rebecca Rukeyser

Week 5: Writers in the Marketplace

Monday, September 28

Deborah Levy: *The Cost of Living. A Writing Autobiography* (Excerpts)

[German text: F.C. Delius: *Der Königsmacher* (Excerpts)

Wednesday, September 30

Pierre Bourdieu: *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (Excerpts)

Week 6: Work

Monday, October 5

Hanna Lemke: „Wasserleiche“ (German)

Wednesday, October 7

Guest: Hanna Lemke (tbc.)

Week 7: Release, Re-Release

Monday, October 12

Frankfurt Book Fair and the “Deutscher Buchpreis“

Pascale Casanova: *The World Republic of Letters* (Excerpts)

Wednesday, October 14

Shields: *The Man Who Wrote the Perfect Novel: John Williams, Stoner, and the Writing Life* (Excerpts)

Friday, October 16: Midterm Essay due

Fall Break (Oct. 19 – Oct. 25)

Week 8: Realism vs. Radical Reinvention

Monday, October 26

Ingo Schulze: „Neues Geld“

Ingo Schulze: „Endstation Sehnsucht. Über Raymond Carver“

Wednesday, October 28

Elke Erb: Poems

Arno Schmidt: *Zettels Traum* (Excerpts)

Week 9: Berlin and Elsewhere

Monday, November 2	Stuart Taberner: "From Province to Berlin" (Excerpts)
Wednesday, November 4	Guest Speaker: Axel Haase (Literary Agent) (tbc.)

Week 10: Institutions

Monday, November 9	Guest: Moritz Malsch (Netzwerk Freie Literaturszene Berlin) tbc.
Wednesday, November 11	Field Trip: Lettrétage

Friday, November 13: Review of Literature due

Week 11: Publishers

Monday, November 16	Peter Ginna: <i>What Editors Do: The Art, Craft, and Business of Book Editing</i> (Excerpts)
Wednesday, November 18	Guest: Milena Adam (Editor, Matthes & Seitz) (tbc.)

Woche 12: Global Writing I

Monday, November 23	Yoko Tawada: Poems Uljana Wolf: "Spitzen" Kito Lorenc: Poems
Wednesday, November 25	Guest: Isabel Fargo Cole

Woche 13: Global Writing II

Monday, November 30	David Damrosh: <i>What is World Literature?</i> (Excerpts) Emine Sevgi Özdamar: <i>Mother Tongue</i> (Excerpts)
Wednesday, December 2	Susan Sontag: "The World as India"

Woche 14: Translation

Monday, December 7

Gast: Steffi Ochel (Übersetzerin aus dem Englischen und Niederländischen)

Wednesday, December 9

Final Discussion

Completion Week

Thursday, December 17: Final Essay due

Fall classes start on Monday, August 31 and run until Friday, December 11 with fall break planned from October 19 – October 25. Completion week is from December 14 - 18. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

<https://berlin.bard.edu/academics/courses/>