

## **From the Ivory Tower to the Executive: Helping the German government build the post-Corona society**

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Seminar hours: Wednesday 9am til noon  
Office Hours: upon request

### **Description**

The advent and wider consequences of the “Corona virus” have the potential to alter the dynamics of international cooperation and the socio-economic arrangements of liberal democracies. According to one view, the virus calls for more international cooperation and a much stronger role for the welfare state. However, this perspective diverges from the populist neo-nationalism that has recently been electorally successful in the US and the UK. In this setting, the centrist governments of Western Europe – led by France and Germany – must square a circle: They want to win back voters attracted by a neo-nationalist agenda, while at the same time safeguarding a culture of international cooperation crucial to their own interests. They also need to update their wealth redistribution policies in the face of skepticism from some voters about an expansion of the welfare state.

This course will try to develop a possible solution to this paradox, focusing on Germany as a case study. After addressing the influence of populist attitudes on foreign policy and the impact of the Corona virus on liberal democracies, we will try to craft policy recommendations for the German government.

Ideally, students will already have a fundamental knowledge of Germany's history and social structure, and of its financial and political systems.

### **Assignments**

In order for you to receive your credits you need to

- Adhere to the general student guidelines at Bard College Berlin
- Prepare all the readings assigned for each class
- This class is dealing with an ongoing subject; thus, we will not use a large reader; instead, it is key to look for more recent information of our topics e.g. via The Economist, Politico Europe and The New York Times
- Participate actively during the in-class discussions
- Give presentations on German scope conditions and concrete policy issues
- Hand in various smaller papers throughout the seminar
- Hand in your final policy recommendations in a format to be discussed

### **Grading**

Grading will be based on three equally weighted contributions:

- Your in-class participation
- The average of your presentation and smaller papers
- Your final paper

## Learning Outcomes

- Widen your understanding of the complex interactions in German politics
- Get a proper grasp how the EU's interwoven crises affect German politics
- Get an idea of the pivotal role Germany plays in contemporary European politics
  
- Comprehend the patterns and mechanisms in which democracies' reactions to Globalization are grounded
- Extend your knowledge of the reasons and factors accounting for the delineation between parts of the progressive elites and their more conservative voter base
- Understanding the key factor domestic party politics, right-wing populism and political communication plays in foreign policy making in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
  
- Present and convey complex information in a given time frame
- Further develop your analytical thinking in applying Boolean and classic statistical reasoning at the same time
- Find information and apply about contemporary German politics on your own
- Craft hands-on policy recommendations for the German government

## Readings

All readings are available online, excluding the following books:

Kriesi, H.P. et al. (2012): Political Conflict in Western Europe. Cambridge University Press.

Lemke, C. and Welsh A. (2017): Germany Today: Politics and Policies in a Changing World. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Lochocki, T. (2017): The Rise of Populism in Western Europe. Springer University Press.

MacGregor, N. (2014): Germany. Memories of a Nation. Penguin Books

Mudde, C. and Kaltwasser, C. (2017): Populism. A very short introduction. Oxford University Press.

Rodrick, D. (2012): The Globalization Paradox. Democracy and the Future of the World Economy. Norton Publishers.

## Course-plan

The class is organized in three chapters:

- 1) The scope conditions of German policy makers that define their capacities and constraints before and during Covid-19 (September 2 – October 7);
- 2) How the Corona virus has affected Germany in particular, how the German government reacted to it and how this changed the outlined scope conditions (October 15 and October 29)
- 3) How the German government should react to Covid-19 based on the changed scope conditions (November 18 – December 16)

**September 2:            Organization of class, no further assignments**

**September 9:            Scope Conditions for Germany policy makers (1/5) – The Strategic Surrounding of the European Union (input presentation 1)**

Applebaum, Anne (2015): The risks of putting Germany front and center in Europe's crisis. The Washington Post, 02/20/2015.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/germanys-centralrole/2015/02/20/d1119cd4-b8f8-11e4-aa05-1ce812b3fdd2\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/germanys-centralrole/2015/02/20/d1119cd4-b8f8-11e4-aa05-1ce812b3fdd2_story.html)

Borger, Julian (2012): Germany slowly comes to terms with sending armed forces abroad, The Guardian, 09/18/2012

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/18/germany-military-moderniseforeign-intervention>

Cohen, R. (2015): The German Question Redux. The New York Times Opinion Pages, 07/13/2015

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/14/opinion/roger-cohen-the-germanquestion-redux.html?mtrref=query.nytimes.com&assetType=opinion>

Karnitschigg, M. (2014): Angela Merkel's year of living dangerously, Politico Europe, 12/31/2015.

<http://www.politico.eu/article/angela-merkels-year-of-living-dangerously/>

Kundnani, Hans (2011): Germany as a Geo-Economic Power. The Washington Quarterly, November 2011.

<https://www.ciaonet.org/attachments/18832/uploads>

Kriesi, Hans Peter et al. (2012): Political Conflict in Western Europe. Cambridge University Press.

Schwarzer, Daniela (2015): Learning on the Job. The EU is battling three major crises – with Germany in the lead in every case. But so far Berlin has not been able to create momentum for building a stronger Europe. Berlin Policy Journal, 11/10/2015

<http://berlinpolicyjournal.com/learning-on-the-job/>

Simms, B. (2015): Germany's triumph: from the ruins of war, how a new German empire was built. New Statesman, 07/30/2015

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2015/07/germany-s-triumph-ruins-warhow->

[new-european-empire-was-built](#)

Steinmeier, Frank-Walter (2016): Germany's New Role. Berlin steps up. Foreign Affairs, July/August 2016.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2016-06-13/germany-s-newglobal-role>

**September 16: Scope Conditions for Germany policy makers (2/5) – Germany's Party System and political configuration (input presentation 2)**

Lemke, C. and Welsh A. (2017): Germany Today: Politics and Policies in a Changing World. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

**September 23: Scope Conditions for Germany policy makers (3/5) – Germany's National Self-Perception (input presentation 3)**

Garton Ash, Timothy (2013): The New German Question, The New York Review of Books, 15th of August 2013.

MacGregor, N. (2014): Germany. Memories of a Nation. Penguin Books

Katzenstein, Peter (1997): United Germany in an integrating Europe, Current History, 96, 608, 116-123.

Simms, Brandon (2013): Cracked Heart of the Old World, The New Statesman, 14th of March 2013.

**September 30: Scope Conditions for Germany policy makers (4/5) – The Rise of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and the crucial role of Political Communication (input presentation 4)**

Lochocki, T. (2017): The Rise of Populism in Western Europe. Springer University Press.

Mudde, C. and Kaltwasser, C. (2017): Populism. A very short introduction. Oxford University Press.

**October 7: Scope Conditions for German policy makers (5/5) – The New Nexus between Party Politics and Foreign Policy (input presentation 5)**

Balfour, R. (2016): Europe's Troublemakers – The populist challenge to foreign policy, EPC February 2016.

[http://www.epc.eu/pub\\_details.php?cat\\_id=17&pub\\_id=6377](http://www.epc.eu/pub_details.php?cat_id=17&pub_id=6377)

Rodrick, D. (2012): The Globalization Paradox. Democracy and the Future of the World Economy. Norton Publishers.

**Task: Write a 3-pager about all scope conditions German policy makers are facing**

**October 15:**           **How Covid-19 has hit the US and Germany and how the US and the German government reacted to it differently (input presentation 6 and 7)**

Readings will be assigned

**October 21:**           **no class (fall break)**

**October 28:**           **How the handling of the Corona virus has changed the scope conditions for German policy makers**

Readings will be assigned

**Additional class to be scheduled to make up for November classes:  
Researching Germany – Class on Sources and Tools**

**Task: Write a 3-pager about how the scope conditions for German policy makers have changed due Covid-19**

**November 4 & 11: no class**

**Task: Write first bibliography about your assigned policy area**

**November 18:**       **Detailed presentation and discussion about policy cluster 1/5: State Finances and Fiscal Policies / Monetary Policies and Eurozone**

**November 25:**       **Detailed presentation and discussion about policy cluster 2/5: Migration and Integration / Demographics and Labour**

**December 2:**         **Detailed presentation and discussion about policy cluster 3/5: Social Inequality / Welfare and Health System**

**December 9:**         **Detailed presentation and discussion about policy cluster 4/5: Infrastructure / Digital Innovation / Education**

**December 16:**       **Detailed presentation and discussion about policy cluster 5/5: Global Strategy: Trade and Security + Wrap up**

**Task: final paper**