

**LANDMARK COLLEGE**Syllabus for HIS2721: *Cities at War – Berlin*

May 14-June 4, 2023

Instructor: Brian Cohen; Program Director: Christie Herbert; Social Support: Andy Donohue

**Course Description**

This 3-credit course explores the experiences and memories of the people and culture of urban centers during times of war. Students will directly engage with the physical, social, cultural, and historical artifacts of the city under exploration, and thus, social and cultural, as well as military, histories will be studied. Students begin their examination of a city at war with an overview of the key historical and cultural features of the city under review, including the rise to power of the wartime government and the methods the political leadership utilizes to expand and consolidate power. Students continue their urban exploration by identifying the different groups of city inhabitants and exploring their experiences during wartime. Students conclude their study of cities at war with a critical examination of the process of reconstruction, historical memory/memorializing, and the inherent controversy of historical memory as the city rebuilds in a post-war era. Students are assessed throughout the course on their ability to actively engage in the daily class activities as well as at the end of each of the three modules through analytical and creative projects reinforcing the course learning outcomes identified below.

Specifically, the *Cities at War - Berlin* study abroad course centers on that capital city's history during WWII, from both German and Allied perspectives, though emphasis is placed on the "everyday" experiences of the diverse groups of Berlin citizens under Nazi rule and during wartime. Through class sessions (lectures, discussions, and activities), field trips to historical sites, and both guided tours and self-directed explorations, students will engage with Berlin's complicated and layered past by addressing 3 overarching questions: What were the key features of Berlin's history leading up to, and through, the Nazi regime? How did different groups experience wartime under Nazi rule? How has Berlin memorialized the war?

**Required Texts and Materials:**

Roger Moorhouse, *Berlin at War: Life and Death in Hitler's Capital 1939-1945* (Vintage Books, 2011).

Canvas site for additional readings.

Laptop/tablet/smartphone, flash drive, binder/folder for organizing, notepaper, pens/pencils, notepad, camera and water bottle for historical site visits.

**Course Expectations:**

Students, as representatives of Landmark College, are expected to follow the College's general Study Abroad policies and adhere to the guidelines that will ensure the safety, respect, and positive learning environment for all students and staff. Accordingly, students are expected to attend all class sessions, complete all course assignments in a timely manner, and engage actively in the course's experiential field trips in an appropriate manner. Accommodations will be offered on a case-by-case basis, in conjunction with students and staff members, and with the overall goal of gaining an understanding of Berlin's experiences through wartime at the forefront of any alternative plan of action.

## Course Learning Outcomes

Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:

1. Articulate the meaning of key historical concepts related to our examination of Berlin and WWII.
2. Describe the impact of war on the urban, cultural, and historical landscape of Berlin.
3. Analyze arguments for thesis and supporting evidence.
4. Identify common understandings of history and memory from varied perspectives.
5. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate a variety of primary and secondary source materials.
6. Understand and utilize the formal styles of writing specific to the humanities discipline.
7. Demonstrate understanding of these outcomes in discussions, written assignments, and projects.

## Methods of Assessment

Active Engagement and Participation (30%-see rubric): Students will participate actively, meaningfully, and reflectively in all aspects of the course including reading preparation, journals and trip blogs, class discussions and activities, and, most importantly, our historical site visits/ field trips.

Reading Responses (20%): Students will generate 200–300-word weekly reading responses that first and foremost make connections between the assigned readings and the weekly themes of the course. Responses will challenge students to make sense of what life was like in Berlin during WWII by balancing the personal, “Berlin’s-eye view” with the larger elements of Germany’s role in WWII.

Projects/Written Assignments (50%):

Project 1: “Primary Sources as Stories” – Students select a primary source (this may or may not be text-based) related to a key feature of Berlin’s history and the rise, and establishing of power, of Nazi Germany. They will complete a primary source analysis (1-2 pgs.) that tells “a story” of Germany’s past, utilizing the source to recognize various perspectives and demonstrate sound historical thinking.

Project 2: “Historical Site Guide” – Students select one historical site we visit together as a class, or they visit individually, and write about their experience by creating a 3pg. historical site guide. The assignment asks students to pay particular attention to the organization of the historical site’s spaces and its presentations of objects, images, and texts to represent the past. Students may also depict a “story” of a particular person/group affected by Nazi rule and evaluate the effectiveness of the historical site’s presentation of that material. Specifically, students will address the following questions:

- How does the historical site’s spatial organization relate to the history represented there?
- Are there controversies about the historical site’s creation of meaning?
- How does this site reflect the everyday experiences of different groups during war?

Project 3: “Comparative Memorials” Final Visual Presentation – Now that students have had the opportunity to explore Berlin and examine its history, they will conclude the course with a visual (PPT images) comparative analysis of how that history has been memorialized. Choosing smaller, “quieter in character,” memorials or larger, more centralized ones, students will reflect on their chosen memorials and generate a PowerPoint presentation to the class, addressing the questions below:

- Site: Where is the memorial? How does it interact with the space and other things around it? Under what circumstances do people encounter it? Would it be possible to miss this memorial?
- Form: Why do you think it takes the form it does? What is the relationship between the form and what it is commemorating in the memorial? Was there controversy in selecting the form of this memorial? What is the relationship between the form of the memorial and your response to it?
- Comparison: How does the work compare to another memorial of this type? Theme? Style?
- Significance: What is the significance of the different ways Berlin has memorialized WWII?

## Daily Schedule for Summer, 2023

**Week #1 (Module 1): A History of Berlin and the Rise of Nazism**

Weekly Guiding Question: What were some of the key historical features of Germany under Nazi rule?

Required Readings for the Week: Moorhouse, chs.1-7; selected Canvas readings

Monday: arrive and settle in

Tuesday: Morning (10:00-11:30am): "Introduction to the Course and Brief History of Berlin"  
Afternoon Historical Site Visit: *The Schwerbelastungskorper*,

Wednesday: Morning: "The Rise of the Nazis and Welthauptstadt Germania"  
Afternoon Historical Site Visit: *Tempelhof Airport and Recreation Area*  
Reading Response #1 Due

Thursday: All-Day Historical Site Visit (9:00am): *The Olympic Stadium*  
Office Hours: 4-6pm in CIEE Lounge

Friday: Morning: "The Nazi Consolidation of Power"  
Afternoon: Free  
Journal/Blog #1 Due

**Project #1: Due Saturday**

**Week #2 (Module 2): Life in Berlin during the War**

Weekly Guiding Question: What were the experiences of different groups under Nazi rule?

Required Readings for the Week: Moorhouse, chs. 8-14; selected Canvas readings

Monday: Morning (10:00-11:30am): "Resistance to Nazi Rule"  
Afternoon Historical Site Visit: *The German Resistance Museum*

Tuesday: Morning: "Persecution under Nazi Rule"  
Afternoon Historical Site Visit: *The Topography of Terror*  
Reading Response #2 Due

Wednesday: All-Day Historical Site Visit (9:00am): *Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp*

Thursday: Morning: "Personal Stories of Life in Berlin, and Reactions to Nazi Rule"  
 Afternoon: Office Hours 1-3pm in CIEE Lounge  
 Journal/Blog #2 Due

Friday: Morning: **Project #2 Due**  
 Afternoon: Free

### **Week #3 (Module 3): Berlin's Memorialization of World War Two**

Weekly Guiding Question: How has Berlin and Germany remembered and memorialized WWII?

Required Readings for the Week: Moorhouse chs. 15- "Epilogue"; selected Canvas readings

Monday: Morning (10:00-11:30am): "How and Why We Memorialize Historical Events"  
 Afternoon Historical Site Visit: *The Jewish Museum*

Tuesday: Morning: "Berlin's Various Memorials and the Significance of Memorialization"  
 Afternoon Historical Site Visit: Walking tour of *The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under Nazi Rule, Memorial to the Victims of Euthanasia (T4), Sinti-Roma Memorial*  
 Reading Response #3 Due

Wednesday: All-Day Historical Site Visit (9:00am): *the Reichstag Building and Memorial*

Thursday: Morning: "The Controversy and Legacy of Memorialization"  
 Afternoon: Office Hours 1-3pm in CIEE Lounge  
 Journal/Blog #3 Due

Friday: Morning: **Project #3 Due: "Final Presentations"**  
 Afternoon: Office Hours 1-3pm in CIEE Lounge for late work / revisions session

Saturday: Pack and Group Dinner

**Sunday: Leave for BER Airport**

### Berlin Historical Web Sites

#### Week 1:

- The Story of Berlin Museum <http://www.story-of-berlin.de/>
- Schwerbelastungskorper <http://www.schwerbelastungskoerper.de/>
- Tempelhof Airport <https://www.thf-berlin.de/en/>
- Olympic Stadium <http://olympiastadion.berlin/en/home/>
- German History Documents [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/section.cfm?section\\_id=13](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/section.cfm?section_id=13)
- The German History Museum <http://www.dhm.de/en.html>
- Albert Speer and Germania <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOXmrVR00RI>; <http://www.secretcitytravel.com/berlin-march-2014/albert-speer-nazi-architect-berlin.shtml>; [https://archive.org/details/Inside\\_the\\_Third\\_Reich\\_Albert\\_Speer](https://archive.org/details/Inside_the_Third_Reich_Albert_Speer)

#### Week 2:

- The German Resistance Memorial Center <http://www.gdw-berlin.de/en/home/>
- Topography of Terror <http://www.topographie.de/en/>
- Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp <https://www.sachsenhausen-sbg.de/en/history/1936-1945-sachsenhausen-concentration-camp/>
- Rosenstrasse Resistance (Factory Action) <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10008064>
- Wannsee <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005477>

#### Week 3:

- The Jewish Museum <https://www.jmberlin.de/en>
- Holocaust Memorial/Sinti/Roma/Euthanasia/LBGTQ <https://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/home.html>
- Reichstag/Bundestag <http://www.bundestag.de/en/>
- The Marzahn Gypsy-Roma Camp <https://www.memorialmuseums.org/eng/staettens/view/1427/Memorial-to-the-Victims-of-the-Marzahn-%c2%bbGypsy-Camp%c2%ab>
- The New Synagogue <https://centrumjudaicum.de/?lang=en>
- Stolpersteine Project <http://www.stolpersteine.eu/en/>

#### Additional:

- Berlin Underworld Museum <https://www.berliner-unterwelten.de/en/index.html>
- Rick Steves' Guide to Berlin <https://www.ricksteves.com/europe/germany/berlin>
- Trip Advisor Museum Guide <https://www.tripadvisor.com/Guide-g187323-k121-Berlin.html>
- National Geographic's Guide <http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/city-guides/berlin-germany/>
- Clark University Blog <http://www.clarku.edu/blogs/7-continent-research-trip-professor-explores-rich-history-lgbtq-life-berlin>
- Battle of Berlin and WWII Tours <http://www.humboldtoursberlin.com/tours/battle-of-berlin-ii-world-war/>