

# Exploring Berlin Museums

<b>Semester:</b>	Summer semester 2018
<b>Course instructor:</b>	Dr. Victoria Bishop Kendzia / vbishopkendzia@gmail.com
<b>Subject area:</b>	Cultural Studies
<b>Credits:</b>	5 ECTS
<b>Time:</b>	Tuesday 14 – 18 c.t. (Irregular, note actual dates!!!)
<b>Room:</b>	0203

## Course description:

This anthropologically inflected course is interdisciplinary in nature. The aim of the course is to explore and critically analyse certain key aspects of Berlin's museological landscape, using anthropological methods. This will be realized during the various field trips to relevant sites. The focus is on two particularly visible and conflict-ridden aspects of this landscape, namely the Jewish narrative and the topic of migration.

## Learning objectives:

To enable the students to get to know a number of Berlin museums using anthropological methods and to critically analyse them within a larger theoretical framework of "self" and "other" constructions. To explore the role of museums in rendering such constructions visible and therefore debatable. To work with both English and German language texts and exhibitions and to enable new German speakers to use their language skills in a constructive educative environment.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

### Knowledge

- Understand, describe and identify key aspects of Berlin museums.
- Connect these findings to historical and cultural narratives, specifically the Jewish narrative and post-WWII migration to Germany.
- Relate specific museum practices to both historical and contemporary issues.

### Academic/Transferrable Skills

- Analyze and critically reflect on both relevant academic and media-based literature.
- Work in a diverse classroom with an open-ears policy. Sharing original ideas and welcoming the differing ideas of others in a constructive group-work environment.

- Communicate and discuss independently selected issues relating to museology and cultural representations.

### Competencies

- Text analyses of the relevant literature.
- Development of self-reflexive skills, recognizing their own positionalities and respecting those of others. Demonstrating these skills in a research report.
- Use of reflexive anthropological methods in order to read and critically analyse museum spaces and other examples of cultural representations.

### **Assessment portfolio:**

**All the following must be completed in order to pass the course. Each requirement is weighted equally.**

- I. Active attendance and participation in class discussions and field trips.
- II. Doing the readings and preparing two to three discussion/content questions **on the readings in advance of the class, as assigned.**
- III. Participation in a group presentation about a field site/topic of your choice relevant to the course. Topic should be checked with the instructor in advance. Time allowing, site visits are encouraged.
- IV. A research report with bibliography (8-10 pages, not including bibliography or photos), double-spaced, Times New Roman. Please send me your report by e-mail as a word or pdf. file only. Due date **June 26th** midnight, Berlin time. You may write in English, German, Spanish or French. Late papers will lose 2% of a grade per day late.

### **Language requirements:**

English B2 Required.

**NB:** This is a BA-level course. Preference will be given to BA-level students, should there be a waiting list. MA-level students who wish to take this course must discuss this in advance with the instructor.

A reader – ask for Reader **Number 1** – will be made available for purchase at Sprintout (Georgenstraße 190, 10117 Berlin, beside the Grimm Zentrum library) for this course with all the required readings, and some supplementary ones.

### **Timetable:**

**There will be 7 sessions in total, each four hours long, in order to accommodate the museum visits.**

**17 Apr. Class 1: In class session**

Intro. to course, lecture on the Jewish Narrative, and post WWII migration to Germany, intro. to the “conversation walk” method.

**24 Apr. Class 2: Field Trip to the Jewish Museum Berlin**

We meet there in or near the Glass Court.

Address: Lindenstrasse 9-14, 10969 Berlin

Transit connection: Hallesches Tor U1/U6

Focus on using the conversation walk method.

**15 May. Class 3: Field Trip to the German Historical Museum**

We meet there in the lobby inside main entrance off Unter den Linden

Address: Unter den Linden 2, 10117 Berlin

Use of field diary and a specific group assignment for this visit. We will discuss the student presentation guidelines and dates.

**22 May. Class 4: Field trip and Workshop – Villa Global**

Location: Jugendmuseum Schöneberg, Hauptstrasse 40, 10827 Berlin.

As this site is a bit more difficult to find than the others, I will be at the nearest subway station (U7 Eisenacherstrasse) on the platform at between 14:00 and 14:15 to collect any students who might not know the way. It is a ten minute walk, provided one takes the Gothaer Str. exit. The workshop starts at 14:30 sharp. **You need to be on time for this!**

**29 May. Class 5: In-class session**

We will bring the impressions of the museums together in a workshop environment. Discussion on all the assigned readings will take place during this session. Be sure to send me have 2-3 discussion questions per text by May 24th midnight (Ostow 2007; Purin 2008; Rothberg/Yildiz 2011; Yurdakul 2006; Shooman/Spielhaus 2010; and Bunzl 2005.) We will finalize the student presentations topics and dates.

### **05 June. Class 6: Student presentations**

Up to three can fit in the class time. We will have feedback and discussion on these.

### **12 June. Class 7: Student presentations**

#### **Attendance Policy:**

You may not miss more than one session, as these are double sessions. If you do know that you have to miss a session in advance, let me know beforehand and we can arrange a make-up task, if necessary. In case of illness or other emergency, let me know as soon as possible and provide proof of the problem. I can be flexible with make-up tasks, provided I am kept informed. Do become familiar with the public transport system in Berlin. Transport difficulties are not an excuse for an absence. It is the students' responsibility to get to the sites on time.

#### **Plagiarism Policy:**

The presentation of another person's words, thoughts, ideas, judgments, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes plagiarism. The penalty for this is failure of the course.