

## GERM 451/627 – CROSS CULTURAL EXPLORATIONS

Instructor: Stefan Höppner

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 am – Noon or by appointment, 218C Craigie Hall

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### World Cities (Preliminary Syllabus, Jan. 12, 2015)

What does it mean to live in a global city today? How do they change through the forces of globalization? How do different cultures interact? Through films and literary texts, class will explore these questions as they relate to such cities as Berlin, Cairo, Beijing, Tokyo or Moscow. This course draws on the expertise of department members in German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic/Muslim cultures to draw comparisons between the cities being examined. Guest lectures by other department members will examine the core issues by comparing the respective cities and societies.

The following texts are available at the U of C bookstore. All of them are required.

1. Kaminer, Wladimir. *Russian Disco*. Trans. Michael Hulse. London: Ebury Press, 2002. Print.

Further texts will be announced in January and/or made available via Desire2Learn.

Markings	Grading	
Undergraduates (GERM 451):	A+ = 100-97%	C+ = 70-67%
Essays 20%	A = 96-91%	C = 66-62%
Class participation 30%	A - = 90-86%	C- = 61-58%
Term paper 50%	B+ = 85-81%	D+ = 57-54%
	B = 80-76%	D = 53-50%
Graduates (GERM 627):	B- = 75-71%	F = 49% and below
Essays 20%		
Class participation 20%		
Term paper 60%		

**Participation and attendance:** Class discussion is a key factor in this course. Attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade. The quality of the sessions will depend upon your preparedness and willingness to engage with each other. You must have read and thought about the required readings before coming to class. You will need to read the assigned course material, and attempt to come to a preliminary understanding of the material we will discuss in class. Needless to say, you should own a copy of the course books and print out and mark up any additional readings. Please note that you do not have to have understood everything you have read to make a valuable contribution. Expressing doubts, disagreements, and asking for clarification is a useful way of contributing to discussion. Your class participation mark will be based on the quality rather than the quantity of your contribution. Dominating discussion without listening to others will damage your grade. Also, it is essential that all participants treat each other with respect and courtesy. Students who feel unable to actively engage in classroom discussion must bring their concerns to the instructor's attention early so that an alternative strategy to ensure adequate performance can be sought. Unexplained absences will be penalized up to a loss of a full letter on the final grade. Also, please don't use electronic devices during class except for accessing digital copies of the required texts on a reading device, as using computers or cell phones for other purposes might distract yourself as well as those around you.

**Essays:** You will be required to write two essays (2-3 pages for undergraduates, 3-5 pages for graduates, letter-sized paper, Times New Roman font 12 pt, double-spaced) One of them will be about the texts discussed in this class, or an aspect of these texts. Topics should be discussed with the instructor beforehand, either after class, during office hours, or via e-mail. You will be expected to give your personal opinion on a text. To make sure your impressions are still fresh, please turn in your essay no more than a week after we discussed a text; due dates therefore vary by topic.

The second essay will be on the topic "My World City", in which you are to write about your personal experience with a global city, or about what your ideal global city would look like. These will be read and discussed during class time on April 2, 7 and 9. These essays are due on March 31.

By turning in an essay, you certify that the work is your own; that you have given proper credit and citation to the work of others; and that you have not committed any other form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Any case of plagiarism will result in a failing grade and possible consequences up to expulsion from U of C. For definitions of plagiarism, please see the course calendar. Students are required to complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade.

**Research paper:** Due April 21 at noon. Papers should be approx. 10-15 pages for Undergraduates, 15-20 pages for Graduate Students (letter-sized paper, Times New Roman font 12 pt, double-spaced). Topic needs to be discussed with and approved by the instructor, preferably during office hours or after class sessions. If you are a major or graduate student in our German programs, you are encouraged to write in German; if you are not a native speaker, this will of course be taken into account. At the discretion of the instructor, a paper submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. By turning in a paper, you certify that the work is your own; that you have given proper credit and citation to the work of others; and that you have not committed any other form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty; cases of plagiarism will result in a failing grade, be reported to the department head and the dean, and may result in consequences up to expulsion from U of C. For definitions of plagiarism, please see the course calendar. Students are required to complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

**Writing skills statement:** All writings assignments will be marked according to content, form, analysis, and originality as well as clarity of writing including grammar, spelling, and organization. To improve your writings skills, contact the Effective Writing Centre (SS 301). If you are a student with a disability, who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to:

- Register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237), and
- Discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>
Week 1 January 13/15	<i>Introduction</i> Bushido – „Berlin Tag und Nacht“ Sweed – „Dickes B“	<i>Theory: Modern Cities – From Town to Metropolis</i> Georg Simmel – “The Metropolis and Mental Life” Charles Baudelaire – “A une passante” Franz Kafka – “On the Tram” Alfred Döblin – <i>Berlin Alexanderplatz</i> (excerpt)
Week 2 January 20/22	<i>Theory: Global Cities Today I</i> United Nations Research Institute for Social Development – <i>States of Disarray: The Social Effects of Globalization</i> (excerpt) Stanley D. Brunn, Rina Ghose and Mark Graham – “Cities of the Future” ( <i>Cities of the World</i> , 557-596)	NO CLASS
Week 3 January 27/29	NO CLASS	<i>Global Cities Today II</i> Saskia Sassen – “Analytic Borderlands: Race, Gender and Representation in the New City” Homi Bhabha – <i>The Location of Culture</i> (excerpt) Michael Peter Smith – “Transnationalism and Citizenship”
Week 4 February 3/5	Berlin: Wladimir Kaminer, <i>Russian Disco</i>	Berlin: Wladimir Kaminer, <i>Russian Disco</i>
Week 5 February 10/12	Beijing: <i>Beijing Bicycle</i> (taught by Christopher Lupke)	Beijing: <i>Beijing Bicycle</i> (taught by Christopher Lupke)
Week 6 February 17/19	NO CLASS: Reading Week	NO CLASS: Reading week
Week 7 February 24/26	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Week 8 March 3/5	Moscow: TBA (taught by Olga Mladenova)	Moscow: TBA (taught by Olga Mladenova)
Week 9 March 10/12	Tokyo: Yasujiro Ozu, <i>Tokyo monogatari</i>	Tokyo: Wim Wenders, <i>Tokyo-Ga</i>
Week 10 March 17/19	Tokyo: TBA (taught by X. Jie Yang)	Guest lecture: “Literature and the Global City” (Sascha Seiler, University of Mainz)
Week 11 March 24/26	Tokyo: TBA (taught by X. Jie Yang)	NO CLASS
Week 12 March 31/April 2	Cairo: TBA (taught by Asmaa Shehata) “My World City” essays due	My World City: Your essays
Week 13 April 7/9	Cairo: TBA (taught by Asmaa Shehata)	My World City: Your essays
Week 14 April 14	Final Discussion	
Week 15 (April 18-29)	April 21: Research papers due at noon!	