

## The Berlin Wall and the Cold War Era

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28 June – 9 July 2021

**CATEGORY** Social Sciences, Politics & History

### COURSE STRUCTURE

The course content is equivalent to an on-site course offering 45 contact hours. The study time includes:

- virtual classroom lessons with the lecturer and the fellow students (50%)
- group exercises (25%)
- assignments and self-study (25%)

### TRACK B – WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF VIRTUAL CLASSROOM LESSONS

- Course days: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- Time: TBA – each session will last 2.15h and will take place within the time frame of  
12.30 pm – 6.30 pm (Berlin time, UTC+2)  
6.30 pm – 0.30 am (Beijing time, UTC+8)  
8.30 pm – 2.30 am (Sydney time, UTC+10)  
5.30 am – 11.30 am (Chicago time, UTC-5)

### COURSE LANGUAGE

This course is taught in English, including the readings. For the understanding of the texts and the discussions in class, language-level B2 (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) is required.

### TARGET GROUP

Undergraduate students of all subjects with a strong interest in contemporary history, social sciences, politics, European studies.

### CREDITS = 5 ECTS

*All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).*

### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)
- Recommended hardware: external headset for better sound quality

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Learning extends beyond your virtual course! As a participant in HUWISU, you are invited to join cultural, social, and academic programs. Cultural activities are designed to help students meet fellow international students, learn more about Berlin, and practice German language abilities. Apply what you learn in class, share your extracurricular interests, and expand your social network beyond your course through these programs!



## VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

With the support of the online format, HUWISU introduces new cultural and social activities. The cultural activities will be both synchronous and asynchronous.

Our scheduled live meetings might include games, cooking/baking together, or a trivia night. You still have the unique opportunity to build community across time zones and meet your fellow international students through synchronous programming. More information about the specifics is TBA.

Learn and read about Berlin history or German culture in between classes! No matter your field of study or interests, Berlin has artistic, political, and cultural significance. Take a look at the eBook "Perspectives on Berlin". It will include an extensive collection of digital resources about Berlin. Although you may be oceans away from Germany, connecting ourselves to Humboldt-Universität's culturally and historically rich location is still incredibly valuable.

### EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

**Preparation for lively discussions in the virtual classroom:** be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

**Assignments:** complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

**Commitment in online-class:** pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers).

**Academic guidelines:** Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical) especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct.

**Attendance policy:** No unexcused absences are permitted. Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the HUWISU office.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

For almost 30 years, the Berlin Wall was a symbol of the division of the city of Berlin, of Germany and of Europe during the era of the Cold War between the two superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Consequently, the fall of the Wall in 1989 was a hugely symbolic turning point in world history.

But how can we explain the building of such a dividing monument? How can we account for its fall in 1989? And how does the Wall influence our lives today?

The course will provide answers to such questions via readings of texts from political science, sociology and history, in order to further investigate the ground on which the events between 1961 and 1989 took place.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The aim of this online course is to introduce participants to the multi-faceted history of the Berlin Wall. After a brief introduction to the historical and ideological backgrounds of the Cold War this course will turn to a detailed analysis of the event history of the Berlin Wall: from the end of World War II via the formation of two blocs until the building of the Berlin Wall, from the building of the Wall via its fall in 1989 until today. To complete the picture of the history of the German/Berlin division and the Cold War, we will focus on the social, economic, and (popular) cultural history of the two German states and Germany since reunification.

## READINGS

Reading materials will be available via Moodle during the course.

## ASSIGNMENT INFO

In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to actively attend all sessions (you may not miss more than one synchronous session), and to hand in weekly assignments as well as an academic paper (5 pages) on the topic. Submission deadline: last course day.

**The final grade will be composed of weekly assignments and active participation in class (50%) and the final academic paper (50%).**

## YOUR INSTRUCTORS

Dr. Jochen Hille, born 1972, is a political scientist. His main interests are welfare studies (mainly health and labor market policies), European Integration and the construction of national identity. His regional focus lies on Germany and Norway. He studied and carried out research at Freie Universität Berlin, Philipps University Marburg, Universities of Bergen and Oslo (Norway), ETH Zurich and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

Beside the scientific work he is professionally working as a consultant for social policies and as a project manager/social worker in diverse governmental labor market programs. He gained a wide range of teaching skills in governmental programs, in civic education, public schools and by teaching high ranked governmental professionals.

In academia he regularly teaches political sciences and economics on the welfare state at „Berlin School of Economics“, the „University of Cooperative Education Plauen“ and the „University of Applied Sciences for Media, Communication and Management“ and occasionally at Best-Sabel University, HTW and Business School Berlin.

In the HUWISU program he has been teaching since 2013 the courses on:

- The Berlin Wall
  - Nazi-Germany – Rise and Fall
  - German Social Market Economy – A better Capitalism?
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## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **PART I: Introduction and historical background/overview**

- Introduction and course outline
- Mapping Germany, Europe, and the World: East + West, Then + Now
- Historical and ideological backgrounds: The Soviet Union and the Western Allies from the Russian Revolution until the end of World War II
- Overview of German history 1918 – 1994

### **PART II: Event history and its interpretation(s)**

- From the end of World War II until the formation of the two German states 1949
- Two blocs, two German states, and two Berlins until the building of the Berlin Wall 1961
- The Building of the Berlin Wall 1961: How it happened, why it happened, and what it meant
- Virtual Excursion: Berlin Wall Memorial at Bernauer Straße
- Two blocs, two German states, and two Berlins in the age of the Wall, 1961 – 1989
- The coming down of the Berlin Wall 1989: How it happened, why it happened, and what it meant
- The aftermath of the Fall of the Berlin Wall: German reunification and its domestic, European and global implications

### **PART III: “What life with the Wall was like”**

- Society and Economy in East and West Germany
- (Popular) culture in East and West Germany
- Refugees from East Germany
- Oppression and control in East Germany

### **PART IV: “What life without the Wall has been like”**

- Introduction
- Interviews/Fieldwork
- Presentations of interviews in class
- Film: “Goodbye Lenin”
- In-depth discussion of film

**PART V: Summary**

- Making sense of the past?
- Wrap-up and Evaluation

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The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 06 April 2021