

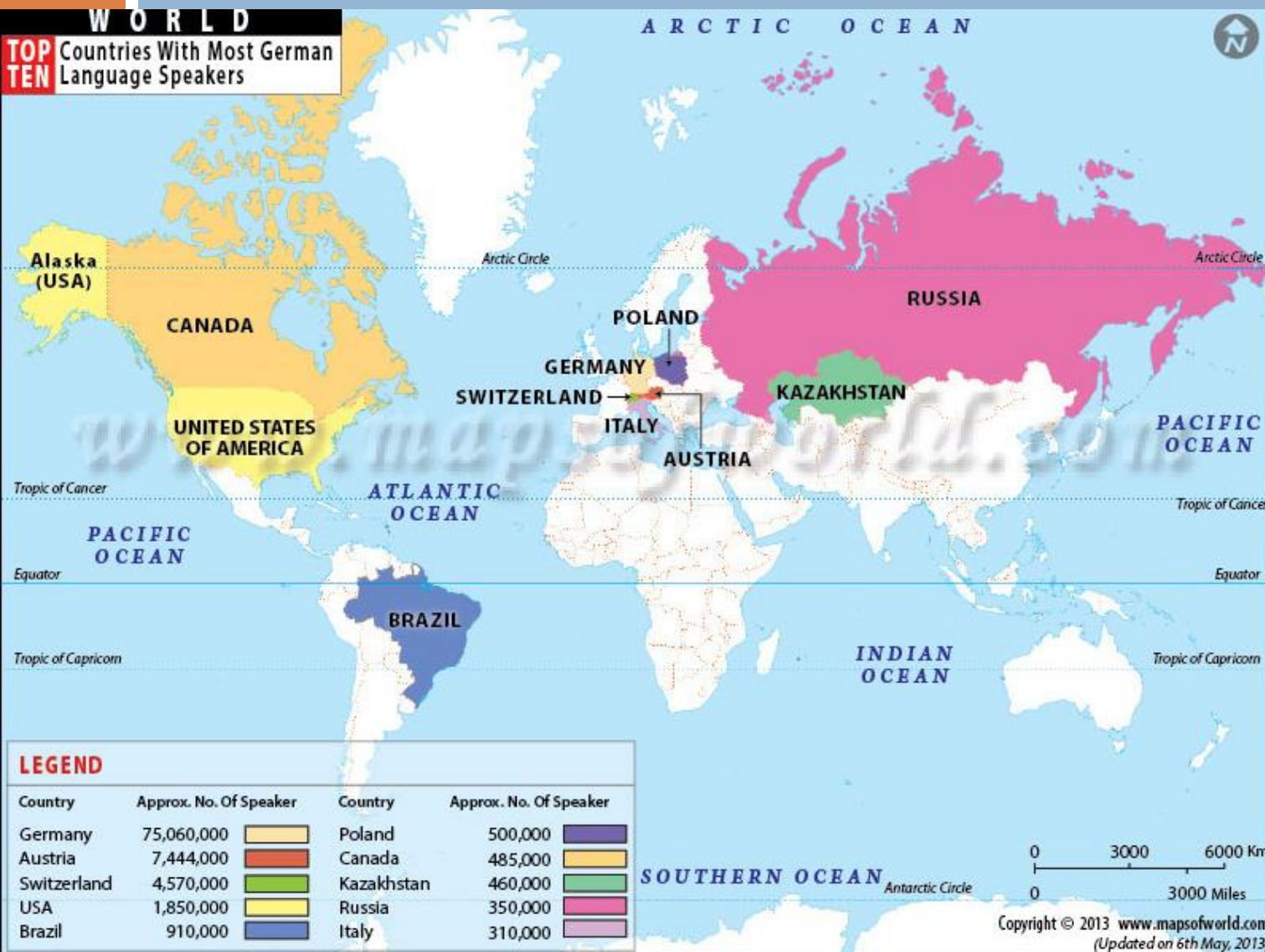
CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES- IRE214

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Fall 2018

Session 1: Introduction

The German Speaking Countries



Germany - more than 80 million speakers

Austria - 8 million

Switzerland - 4.6 million

Belgium - 75.000 people

Luxembourg - 390.000 people

Liechtenstein - 35,000 people

Course Description

- ◆ Interdisciplinary, multilevel introductory course;
- ◆ Provides extensive introduction to the three largest German-speaking societies (GSC) => Germany, Austria and Switzerland;
- ◆ Topics to be discussed:
 - ◆ Specific social, political, and cultural events occurring in the last century that highly affected the different German-speaking countries;
 - ◆ European politics and world wars;
 - ◆ The German split and reunification;
 - ◆ Social diversity and minority culture;
 - ◆ Contemporary political developments.

Course Outcomes

- ◆ Become familiar with histories, politics and cultural diversity within the German-speaking countries;
- ◆ Gain insights into ideas, trends and discourses that have shaped the contemporary German, Austrian and Swiss societies;
- ◆ Compare and contrast the different German speaking societies from various angles (political, cultural, social);
- ◆ Competently analyze current political events in a larger spectrum (the future of the EU, rise of the political right).

Course Structure

Oct 3	1. Introduction	
Oct 10	2. Introduction to Germany, German Federalism	
Oct 17	3. Marks, Hegel and Luther's Reformation	
Oct 24	4. Political History and Political Thought Between World Wars	
Oct 31	5. German Unification and the Question of 'National Identity' in Modern-day Germany	
Nov 7	6. German Minorities in Contemporary Times	
Nov 14	7. Introduction to Austria, Culture and Religion	Essays' titles are due November 20th
Nov 21	8. Austrian National Identity, Politics and Contemporary Minorities	
Nov 28	9. Introduction to Switzerland	Essay's are due December 4th
Dec 5	10. Direct Democracy, Federalism and Political Stability	
Dec 12	11. Comparative Analysis	
Dec 19	12. Final Session	

Requirements

- ◆ Both the mid-term essay and the final exam are mandatory for successful completion of the course;
- ◆ The *Mandatory* reading is mandatory! It will help you choose a topic for the essay and would make the lectures more interesting!
- ◆ In class discussions are encouraged!

Essay

- ◆ Topic => there is no list, students can chose any topic relevant to the course which was not specifically address in class;
- ◆ Titles' submission => **November 20th**
- ◆ 2,000-2.500 words;
- ◆ Essay writing guidelines will be published on IS;
- ◆ Submission deadline => **December 4th, 8am**
- ◆ Pass/Fail

Final Exam and Grading

- ◆ Take home exam (no-resit), open questions, 48h to submit to IS;
- ◆ Stay tuned for exact date;
- ◆ Exam covers lectures and literature;

- ◆ Deadline is important. Exams submitted more than 15 min after the deadline will NOT be marked;
- ◆ Pass/Fail course.

Further Important Information

- ◆ Mandatory (assigned) reading is available online;
- ◆ Further reading is there to help!
- ◆ The lectures will be uploaded to IS after each session;
- ◆ Lecture attendance is not mandatory but highly encouraged;

- ◆ Questions? Problems? E-mail me!

Discussion

- ◆ Have you visited any of the German speaking countries?
- ◆ Have you studied in any of the German speaking countries?
 - ◆ Which one? Why? What did you like/dislike the most?
 - ◆ In what way are the GSC different than the Czech Republic/your home country?
- ◆ Do you speak German? Did you ever take a university course about the GSC?
- ◆ 2. What do you think are the main similarities/differences between the German speaking countries? Are they more similar or distinct?

Next Session... Germany!

- ◆ Facts and figures, German federalism, political parties
 - ◆ Education system, economy, foreign relations, army
 - ◆ Historical turning points
 - ◆ Germany and the EU
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- ◆ What are the key events in the history of Germany?
 - ◆ What are the dominant features of the German culture?
 - ◆ What issues and challenges does Germany face today?



Key Periods in German History



- ◆ The German Kingdoms, united by Charlemagne in the 700s became part of Holy Roman Empire;
- ◆ After 1815 Germany made up of 39 independent states.
- ◆ 1864-71: Wars of Unification, expelled Austria & united Germany under Prussian leadership.
- ◆ 1871-1918 Imperial Germany (Authoritarian government, some degree rule of law)
- ◆ The Weimar Republic, 1918-33 (democracy) Weimar Republic fostered loyalty to state by using language as a unifying factor (linguistic purism).

Key Events in German History



- ◆ 1933-1945 Nazi regime (The Third Reich): first political unification of all German speakers under one state;
- ◆ Germany lost two world wars;
- ◆ 1949: Germany divided into Communist East and democratic West;
- ◆ West Germany became an economic power;
- ◆ After the fall of communism, Germany united in 1990.