

MLC200 Contemporary Germany

1st and 2nd quarters, Sophomore

Instructor	ISOZAKI KOTARO
Style of Class	Lecture
Number of Credits	2
Day and Period	Monday, period 3

Course Description

This course deals with environmental problems, which are among the major elements in contemporary Germany and are deeply connected with political and economic issues. The course provides an overview of environmental activities from the 19th Century to the present, as Germany shifted from being a pollution superpower to a state founded on environmental principles. The ideas, environmental consciousness, and cultural aspects underpinning environmental policy in Germany are explored incorporating comparisons with Japan. It is possible to take many different approaches to the interdisciplinary field of environmental problems, but in this course we focus especially on the standpoint of the humanities.

Course Objectives

Students will:

- (1) use their study of contemporary Germany to deepen their understanding of issues in the German-speaking world, which constitutes a core part of the EU,
- (2) consider the contemporary social significance of environmental policies and environmental consciousness in Germany from the 19th through 21st Centuries,
- (3) use academic literature to understand the diversity of standpoints related to environmental problems, and to analyze them, and
- (4) experience pro-active and collaborative learning in which each individual takes responsibility for presenting their work.

Expected Outcomes

- Become familiar with conditions in contemporary Germany and the different arguments around environmental policy
- Acquire skills of multi-faceted and critical thinking as used in the humanities and social sciences.
- Gain comparative insights into contemporary Japan through study of the EU and Germany, and apply them to research activity in the future.

Prerequisites

It is desirable, although not mandatory, for students to study German language and related courses.

Class Materials

The principal teaching materials will be distributed to students during the course, so we plan not to assign a specific textbook. The assigned reference works are shown below, and those used for the presentation task will be introduced as necessary.

- (a) Hamamoto Takashi, Takahashi Mamoru, *Gendai doitsu o shiru tame no 62sho* (62 Chapters for Understanding Contemporary Germany), Akashi Shoten, 2013.
- (b) Hasel, Karl, *Mori ga kataru doitsu no rekishi* (History of the Forest), Tsukiji Shokan, 1996.
- (c) Bramwell, Anna, *Ekorojii: kigen to sono tenkai* (Ecology in the 20th Century), Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 1992.
- (d) Yoshida Fumikazu, *Doitsu no chosen: enerugi seisaku no nichidoku hikaku* (Germany's Challenge: Comparison on Energy Policy in Japan and Germany), Nippon Hyoron sha, 2015.
- (e) K.H.Feuerherd et al. *Kankyo ni yasashii no ha dare? Nihon to Doitsu no hikaku* (Japan vs. German) Gihodo Shuppan, 2005.

Course Method

Classes are basically conducted in lecture format, but incorporate seminar format in certain parts. The instructor delivers lectures and assigns reading topics periodically. Students present on the reading topics individually or in groups, and other students are also expected to participate actively in question-and-answer sessions following the presentations. Students also complete a reflective paper in each class, and produce a final report at the end of semester.

Evaluation/Assessment

Reflective papers

Time will be allocated at the end of each class for students to reflect on the class and write about the class content and their opinions, questions, and requests in relation to it.

Presentation materials

Reading topics will be undertaken by all members of the class, but each student must make at least one presentation on a topic during the semester. When making their presentations, students need to prepare presentation materials in advance, introducing the content of the readings and stating their own opinions and interpretations.

Final report

Report topics are chosen by students in line with their interests, but are expected to be informed by the content of lectures and student presentations

Grading

30%	Reflective papers
20%	Presentation materials
50%	Final report

Course Schedule

Week 1:

Orientation and introduction: The path from pollution superpower to environmental state; introduction to reading topics and selection of presentation topics by students

Week 2:

Lecture on historical development of environmental problems: Process of industrial revolution in the 19th Century and spread of natural scientific knowledge

Week 3:

Lecture on historical development of environmental problems: Darwinism and Ernst Haeckel

Week 4:

Lecture on historical development of environmental problems: Environmental aesthetics and love of hometown in the 20th Century

Week 5:

Lecture on historical development of environmental problems: Environmental consciousness in East and West Germany and the present day / video materials on the environment (1)

Week 6:

Lecture on historical development of environmental problems: Video materials on the environment (2); urban living and ecological lifestyles; reports by students and general discussion

Week 7:

Lecture on environmental problems in the contemporary era: Initiatives in the “environmental capital” Freiburg; reports by students and general discussion

Week 8:

Lecture on environmental problems in the contemporary era: Recent trends in “sustainable development”; reports by students and general discussion

Week 9:

Lecture on environmental problems in the contemporary era: Wind turbines and legal action over scenic impact on the Black Forest

Week 10:

Lecture on environmental problems in the contemporary era: The Deep Ecology movement and regionalism; reports by students and general discussion

Week 11:

Lecture on environmental problems in the contemporary era: Environmental education and “spirits attuned to nature”; reports by students and general discussion

Week 12:

Lecture on environmental problems in the contemporary era: Environmental education and nature writing; reports by students and general discussion

Week 13:

Lecture on Japan-Germany comparison in the contemporary era: Comparison of traditional views of nature in Germany and Japan; reports by students and general discussion

Week 14:

Lecture on Japan-Germany comparison in the contemporary era: Germany, Japan, and nuclear power; reports by students and general discussion

Week 15:

Overall review: Lecture and discussion by students; future outlook for environmental problems

Preparation and Follow-up

- (1) Read over the reading topics for each lecture in advance. Read over the applicable sections of the reference books (preparation).
- (2) After lectures, extend your understanding of the lecture content, handouts, and applicable sections of the reference books (follow-up).