

Knox College – Department of Modern Languages

GERM 295/395- Is That Art or Can We Throw it Away? Public Art and Protest in Germany and at Home

Instructor: Brandy E. Wilcox, she/her/hers

Email: bewilcox@knox.edu

Office: Old Knox Jail 26, ext. 7157

Drop-In Hours: Mondays 1:30-2:30pm, Wednesdays: 10:30-11:30am, and by appointment

Meeting times and location

Time: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays 2:40-3:50pm **Room:** GDH 211A

Course Description, Objectives, and Learning Outcomes

Willkommen! What makes art a protest? How do we define the ‘public’ versus the ‘private’ nature of art? Who has access to art and why do we put up these barriers?

In this course, students explore multiple genres of public-facing art, from graffiti and street art to museum culture, slam poetry and public radio. An initial focus is the contextualization of German protest movements and turning points in German history and strategies for political messaging and opinions through the medium of “public” art. Each week, students will explore different genres of public art, discussing examples from the German-speaking context and their own communities. Students will have the opportunity to propose and produce their own creations.. Additional topics in this course include German memorials (Denkmale), censorship, and art funding,

Learning outcomes:

– After completing this course, students in both sections will be able to:

- analyze and interact with public-facing art in both the German-speaking world and their home communities/Galesburg.
- describe the history of public art and protest in the German context
- identify and describe the social and historical contexts of the art that they encounter and question the purpose and impact of the art pieces.
- question and research the powers behind public art installations and identify readings of political impact behind the “who” and “how” of public art
- propose and/or design public art projects addressing the public art categories from the term’s readings

Course Prerequisite and Placement

For German 395: German 210/235 or instructor approval

For German or IS 295: One other course in the English department, sophomore standing, or instructor approval

Required Texts and Materials

- All materials will be made available to you on our Google Classroom
 - <https://classroom.google.com/c/NTE3Nzc2NDQ3NDg2?cjc=3yyv55c>
- We will use [Padlet to post discussions and example artworks](#)
- We will use [this Padlet to manage our timeline\(s\)](#) of protest movements

Electronic devices are playing an ever-larger role in our everyday lives and changing the way we learn (and the way I teach). **For class time, in general, I ask that cell phones or other devices be put away when they are not being used in an intentional way for classwork.** I want you to speak and listen with the people around you while working with our texts. Additionally, you must have a copy of the texts we are working with when you are in class.

If you need to check your phone, please step outside the classroom.

Regarding Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Cheating:

Please read the Knox Honor Code: <http://www.knox.edu/academics/honor-code.html>

A few additional items of guidance and advice for those working in a non-native language:

1. Copying work from online translation engines, conjugation sites, or from an answer key is an attempt to receive credit for work that you did not create. This is precisely the definition of plagiarism and a clear violation of academic honesty. If you find yourself reaching for these tools because you have run out of time, don't understand the material, or for any other reason, please reach out to me instead and we can work together to get you caught up.
2. While seeking the advice of native or expert speakers seems helpful, this sort of help often becomes simply providing answers, which is also a form of "cheating" and therefore has dire consequences.

A final note—sometimes plagiarism is unintentional. It can happen through poor paraphrasing, forgetting to cite a source, etc. I believe you when you say it is unintentional, but I will still need to report it to the Honor Board. This does not reflect how much I enjoy having you in class and as my student. My role as your instructor is to guide you to the best practices in academic work, and sometimes mistakes happen. I encourage you to treat those as opportunities to learn for future work.

Grading Approach and Required Work

This course will focus on qualitative, not quantitative, assessment. Qualitative, loosely defined, means measuring based on the quality of your work. Quantitative, when referring to the traditional letter grade system, has to do with assigning points that reflect a letter grade. This term, rather than receiving letter grades or points for your work, you will instead receive a "complete" or "incomplete" marking, along with feedback that will help you to reach the grade of complete. All assignments will include the information that you need in order to receive a marking of "complete" in the instructions or in a rubric. For work that is marked "incomplete," you will be able to resubmit your work, incorporating the feedback provided.

Components of the Course Grade

Class Preparation	15%	Trimester Project	30%
Discussion and Participation	20%	Weekly Reflections	10%
Midterm exam	10%	"Unpaper" Final	15%

Class Preparation (15%):

As this is a class that is heavily based on classroom discussion and preparation, your work at home will directly affect your performance in class. Preparing for class can include reading, taking notes, submitting discussion questions, etc. Each week you will be given the opportunity to reflect on your preparation for class.

Additionally, you will be expected to submit two discussion questions for each secondary reading (ie: any article or paper we read *about* public art or protest) and 1-2 examples of the type of art we are discussing each week.

You will rate your preparation based on the following criteria each week:

	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
General	Completed all assigned work; reflected on the readings and activities; brought notes from readings to class; brought readings to class.	Completed all assigned work; reflected some on the readings and activities; brought notes from readings to class.	Did not complete required work or readings to prepare for discussion in class.
Written	Submitted 2+ discussion questions and examples.	Submitted 1-2 discussion questions or examples.	Did not submit discussion questions or examples.
Bonuses:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Attended office hours ● Posted additional material relevant to course topic for the week 		Not eligible for bonus

Discussion and Participation (20%):

In-class participation is vital and includes not only evidence of individual preparation and attention, but also contributing to group work, discussion, and classroom knowledge. Participation is calculated based on punctual daily attendance, responding to low-stakes participation opportunities (surveys, group responses, homework answers), volunteering and being responsive when called on, your communication and participation in group activities, and contributions to collaborative activities (for example, filling out information or adding to the shared Google notes during class time).

You are expected to attend class daily and punctually, but I will not be assigning a grade for this. That said, if you do not attend, you cannot participate, and you lose your participation for the day! All absences – regardless of how well motivated – have a negative effect on your ability to get the most out of the course.

Each week, you will be given the opportunity to reflect on your participation in class. You will assign yourself grades based on the following criteria each week. While attendance is not graded, this is a good record for you to have:

	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Attendance	Attended class all three days, arriving on time -OR- communicated proactively when you were unable to attend.	Attended most classes for the week, arriving on time. Communicated absences after class.	Attended at least half of class for the week or late. Absences or lateness without communication.
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You participate actively in free conversation without waiting to be called on. You effectively draw from the readings and texts prepared at home. You remain on task throughout the class period. You do not wait to be told to continue activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You wait to be called on in class discussion, and are sometimes unable to respond. Some of your answers come from the readings, but much of your contribution is based on prior knowledge. You may be distracted by an electronic device or not on task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have not prepared at home and are unable to contribute to the discussion. You may be distracted or not on task

Midterm Exam (10%)

You will have a take-home midterm exam in Week 5 (Distributed Friday, April 21st and due before class on Monday, April 24th). This will be an essay-based exam—open ‘book’, open notes—drawn on the discussion questions and examples of public art that you and your classmates submit for the course. This will be graded both on the quality of your essays and argumentations -and- on your interactions with the discussions we had in class.

Weekly Reflections (10%)

You will need to submit a weekly reflection (minimum of 6 throughout the term) on the work that we discussed in class. These can be relatively informal, but they should make it clear that you were an active participant in the class and are thinking about the topics we discuss. For topics you may expand on one of the discussions we have in class, answer a question submitted by a classmate that we did not discuss, or come up with your own topic.

Trimester Project (30%):

The largest part of your grade will be from the Trimester Project, which will showcase your knowledge and interaction with the themes of the course. You will choose four types of public art that we discuss and **either** write a mini-research project **or** propose/create your own version of that type of art.

Each topic is **due two weeks after the last date of discussion for that topic** (ie: if you want to work on our topic for Week 2, the last day you can turn it in is Friday of Week 4. This will, of course, be shortened for topics from Week 9)

For the Mini-Research Projects:

You may choose any topic that you would like to work on for the mini-research projects, provided it centers around a type of public art. Possible directions include the history of this art in a certain country/culture, the role this type of art has played in a specific protest movement, etc. Please feel welcome to discuss these options with me and we can brainstorm. Requirements are:

- 700-1200 words
- Works cited
 - At least two secondary sources (one must be scholarly)
 - At least one primary source
- Reflection on how this research interacts with or expands upon what we discuss in class

For the Proposals/Creations

You will identify a message, theme, or movement that you would like to create this art for. This should align with how we have discussed this type of art in class and the purposes we identified. You may choose to interact with a single theme/message throughout the term or use varying movements and themes.

Requirements for each piece are:

- to propose an artwork
 - provide an in-depth description or a sketch of the piece
 - provide an artist's statement with the location, potential audience, and purpose of this piece of work
- to create a piece of public art
 - be certain of your legal permission/ability to place this art
 - I am not responsible for consequences that may come should you commit a crime in the course of creating your artwork
 - create the art
 - provide an artist's statement with your vision for the location, potential audience, and purpose of this piece of work
- Project reflection (400-500 words)
 - Discuss how this piece of art interacts with the theme as we have discussed it in class.
 - Explain what decisions you made in creating this piece based on our discussions and the texts from the course

Extension Request Form:

The extension request form is an easy, click-and-go form for you to inform me that you need (up to 3 days of) an extension for your larger assignments. Any extension up to three days is automatically granted provided you submit it before the initial assignment due date. Beyond three days, please submit the request and talk to me within the first three days.

Extensions requested after the due date has passed will not be granted.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScIIlMENGDT_s2SuHVyxvQ302DT5zRP5DACE158fo0RCnC24HA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Disabilities and accommodations

All students are welcome in this class, and I wish to fully include everybody. Students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodations upon request. If you have a learning or other disability—or if you suspect that you have a disability—you should contact Stephanie Grimes (sgrimes@knox.edu). Federal law requires that your privacy in this matter be protected. If you qualify for services through the Office of Disability Support Services, please note that it is your responsibility to work with the office and to provide written documentation supporting this need.

It is the instructor's responsibility to make the course as accessible as possible for all students. You are encouraged to do whatever you need to make the class environment a place where you can engage successfully, including bringing food and/or drink, moving around, using assistive technology and/or fidget devices, etc. Please talk to me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs and how this course can best accommodate them; I welcome any information that you feel is pertinent for me to know about your participation in class. Students do not require documentation from the Office of Disability Support Services to **request** accommodations, nor are they required to disclose any diagnoses or other personal information when making a request. All accommodation requests are confidential.

Diversity and Inclusion

This course addresses diverse communities and seeks to be inclusive of all cultures, ethnicities, religions, disabilities, races, genders, sexuality, and classes. You are expected to behave respectfully at all times in class discussion by listening attentively, acknowledging that differences of opinion are not judgements on each other, and being sensitive in your own responses. Hate speech will not be tolerated.

Pronoun Usage:

In this course, we respect the pronouns of our fellow students, colleagues, and classmates. This is non-negotiable.

Stay in touch!

Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions, comments, or concerns. You can do this through email (bewilcox@knox.edu), by messaging me on Google Chat if I am available, or by attending my Drop-In Hours. I will check all of these means regularly, although if you want a quick reply, my drop-in hours and directly before/after class will guarantee it. That said, please know that it may take me several hours to respond to email, depending on my own workload. If you have read this far, congratulations. Please send me a link to your current favorite song before class time on Monday in week two for a reward. I aim to respond by the end of the next business day (ie: if you email/message on Friday at 2pm, you should plan to hear back by Monday at 5pm).

Course Schedule (subject to change):

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Protest Movements and Sculpture

Week 3: Memorials/Denkmäler

Week 4: Official Installations – documenta, museums

Week 5: Murals and Graffiti

Week 6: Public Performance and Theater

Week 7: Music in Protest (1)

Week 8: Music in Protest (2)

Week 9: Protest signs and ephemeral art

Week 10: Online art and Wrap up