

Through Good Times and Bad

German-American Relations since World War II

WP 23 Vertiefungsmodul Geschichte und Kultur II (6 CP)

Sommersemester 2026

Tu 10:00-12:00

room S 201, Schellingstr. 3 VG

Dr. Andreas Etges

room 206; office hours: Tue 12-1 pm or via Zoom (make appointments by email)

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Moodle: <https://moodle.lmu.de/course/view.php?id=33592>

Password: Airlift

Credit Requirements

- regular and active class participation
- reading of texts
- oral presentation (5-7 minutes)
- research paper based on primary documents (ca. 20.000 characters; SLK 9.000 characters)

In May 2019, Chancellor Angela Merkel said: “The old certainties of the post-war order no longer apply.” While this statement was to some degree a comment on the Trump presidency, it also alludes to the major changes in German-American relations from World War II till today. What began as occupation and reeducation turned into an important partnership, that like all long-term relationships went through good times and bad, with the weaker partner growing more emancipated over time. The seminar will focus both on history and on more recent developments.

This seminar is part of the “Munich Summer Program,” offered by the Amerika-Institut during the summer term. It is open to students from US partner universities, especially the University of Georgia in Athens. Regular class sessions will begin in mid-May, and there will be special (compact) sessions later in the term. Dates will be announced before the term starts. Special class activities and a guest speaker are sponsored by the Halle Foundation in Atlanta.

19 May Introduction, World War II, Postwar Planning, and Occupation

Suggested Post-Surrender Program for Germany (Morgenthau Plan), Sept. 6, 1944

Hermann-Josef Rupieper, The United States and the Founding of the Federal Republic, 1948–1949, in: Detlef Junker (ed.), The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990: A Handbook, Volume 1: 1945–1968, Cambridge 2004, vol. 1, 85-89

Directive to the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Occupation Forces (JCS 1067), April 1945

James F. Byrnes, Restatement of Policy on Germany, Stuttgart, September 6, 1946

Directive to Commander in Chief of United States Forces of Occupation Regarding the Military Government of Germany (JCS 1779), July 11, 1947

19 May 4:15 pm Walking Tour “America in Munich”

26 May Holiday (no class)

2 June The United States and European (Economic) Integration

Gerd Hardach, The Marshall Plan, in: Handbook, vol. 1, 301-309

Michael Wala, The Marshall Plan and the Origins of the Cold War, in: Handbook, vol. 1, 73-77

George C. Marshall, Speech at Harvard University, June 5, 1947

9 June Double Containment, Westbindung, and the German Question

Steven L. Rearden, The Dilemmas of Dual Containment: Germany as a Security Problem, 1945–1950, in: Handbook, vol. 1, 204-208

Frank A. Ninkovich, The United States and the German Question, 1949–1968, in: Handbook, vol. 1, 118-124

Erste Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Adenauer, September 20, 1949

Definition of U.S. Policy on Problems of the Defense of Europe and the German Contribution (NSC 115), Aug. 2, 1951 (excerpt)

Draft Statement of U.S. Policy on Germany (NSC 5727), December 13, 1957 (excerpt)

16 June The United States, Cultural Diplomacy, and Americanization

Geir Lundestad, Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952, in: Journal of Peace Research 23.3 (1986), 263-277

Axel Schildt, Americanization, in: Handbook, vol. 1, 635-642

23 June The Second Berlin Crisis, Détente, Ostpolitik, and the GDR

Christian Hacke, The United States and the German Question, in: Handbook, vol. 2, 18-25

Gottfried Niedhart, The Federal Republic of Germany Between the American and Russian Superpowers: “Old Friend” and “New Partner,” in: Handbook, vol. 2, 26-32

Werner Link, Ostpolitik: Détente German-Style and Adapting to America, in: Handbook, vol. 2, 33-39

Willy Brandt, Two States, One Nation, October 28, 1969

Memorandum of Conversation (White House), October 14, 1970

30 June From the NATO Double-Track Decision to German Unification

Michael Broer, The NATO Double-Track Decision, the INF Treaty, and the SNF Controversy: German-American Relations between Consensus and Conflict, in: Handbook, vol. 2, 148-154

Stephen F. Szabo, The United States and German Unification, in: Handbook, vol. 2, 104-110

Helmut Kohl's Ten-Point Plan for German Unity, November 28, 1989

Charles Krauthammer, The German Revival, in: New Republic. March 26, 1990, 18-21

Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany, September 12, 1990

7 July German-American Relations since the End of the Cold War

Hans-Peter Schwarz, America, Germany, and the Atlantic Community After the Cold War, in: Handbook, vol. 2, 535-565

Transatlantic Academy (ed.), Suspicious Minds: U.S.-German Relations in the Trump Era, Washington, DC 2017

Government Declaration on the Attacks in the United States of America, by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder on September 12, 2001, before the German Bundestag in Berlin

Ben Rhodes, The World as it is: A Memoir of the Obama White House, New York 2018, XIII-XIV

8 July talk by Vera Alexander, the Canadian Ambassador to Germany at Amerikahaus

Guest Speaker on the Current State and the Future of Transatlantic Relations

Andrea Rotter, Head of Division Foreign and Security Policy at the Academy for Politics and Current Affairs of the Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung (HSS) in Munich

16 July

America 250

2-6 pm

film, talk, panels at the Amerika-Institut, followed by the summer fest

4:15 pm Talk on US foreign policy by Hugh Eakin, Editor at Large at Foreign Affairs magazine