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Course title:	Resilience and Transformation in Berlin: Personal Development and Urban Opportunities
Track:	A-Track
Language of instruction:	English
Contact hours:	72 (6 per day)
ECTS-Credits:	6

Course description

How can environmental contexts influence how some people survive through atrocities, even coming back from crises stronger than ever? Resilience is the ability to recover from or adjust to change. This ability comes from resources available in the environment as well as individual characteristics. This course will examine personal and contextual influences that contribute to resilience, with particular emphasis on historical and contemporary contexts of Berlin. Students will use ecological theory¹ as a framework for studying how past and present events have influenced individual resilience and transformation in famous residents and/or community level movements (i.e., sustainable living, urban gardening) in Berlin.

Due to historical and ongoing structures and events, Berlin is an especially interesting venue to examine intersections among place, time, and resilience. The Nazi regime, the Berlin Wall, and the "Staatssicherheit" of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), contributed to a great deal of volatility in Berlin's recent history. We will explore how living through these events might contribute to resilience. We will also consider examples of artists such as David Bowie who returned to a life without drugs when he moved to Berlin in the 1970s. Developmental theorists would interpret Bowie's extraordinary productivity in Berlin to be partially a function of his interactions with the environmental context of Berlin in that time.

Through readings, coursework, assignments, site visits, and a personal project, you will learn to apply theories discussed in class to specific examples of resilience and transformation. The pedagogical focus of this course will be on oral communication. Upon completion of this course, students will have:

- Described and analyzed theories used to understand the influences that social, physical and cultural environments have on individual and community level resilience
- Created a personalized project to investigate how theories of resilience, personality change, and ecological factors apply to a figure who live(d) and or work(ed) in Berlin.
- Applied aspects of the theories you have learned about to five specific sites in Berlin.
- Demonstrated progress in your oral presentation skills and evaluated the oral presentation skills of your peers.

¹ In concert with theories of personality and resilience used in many social science disciplines such as Human Development, Family Studies, Community Development, Psychology, and Education.

Student profile

This course is open to all students. No previous experience with human, social or educational sciences, etc. is necessary.

Prerequisites

Students must be able to speak and read English at an upper intermediate level.

Course Requirements

- Attendance and Active Participation in class is required for all students according to the FUBiS Academic Policies. Each student is required to participate in a minimum of three oral communication assignments or a comparable amount of oral communication activity during the class. Each student will receive explicit training, in the context of the class, in oral communication concerns relevant to the assignments or activity as well as specific feedback, critiquing, and grading of the oral communication assignments or activities from the instructor.
- Students are expected to turn in 1-2 page (double-spaced) Reading Summaries of each of the assigned class readings. These summaries are not intended to be critical analyses of the readings, but rather an indication that they have attempted to understand the readings and to be ready for a productive class discussion on them. The summaries are due at the beginning of the class period during which the reading will be discussed.
- Students are expected to keep a Site Reflection Journal dedicated to their thoughts about the sites in Berlin visited in class. Each entry should be approx. 1-page (double-spaced). It may include the student's thoughts about how the visit may fit in with their course project. Site reflection journals are to be turned in: a) after the third site visit and b) after the last site visit.
- Each student is responsible for developing a Course Project on a chosen topic relating to resilience and transformation in Berlin. Ideally, the student's topic should be related to the personal and professional goals. Students will develop their ideas and final presentation through a series progressively more detailed assignments about it: a) an elevator speech, during which they will "pitch" their initial project idea to the class, b) an outline speech, during which they will explain the main points, and c) the final presentation. Students might find their topics by taking original source material (e.g., notes, media at that time); artifacts and interpretations (i.e., from sites, museums); secondary information from scholarly sources (e.g., articles, biographies); empirical data (e.g., numerical data, primary sources) and will interpret the information within the theoretical frameworks discussed in class.

Grading

Attendance and Active Participation:	20%
Reading Summaries:	15%
Site Reflection Journal:	15%
Berlin Vignettes Activities	10%
Course Project (incl. elevator speech and oral outlines):	40%

Literature

A course reader with the required literature will be provided at the orientation meeting. The reading material includes the following authors, inter alia:

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of Human Development.
- Donnellan, M.B., Hill, P.L., & Roberts, B.W. (2015). Personality development across the life span: Current findings and future directions.
- MacClean, R. (2014). Berlin: Portrait of a city through the centuries.
- Yates, T.M., & Masten, A.S. (2004). Fostering the future: Resilience theory and the practice of positive psychology.

Course schedule

Date	Program*
Monday, June 6, 2016	<p>Getting into a Berlin State of Mind – “Berlin is all about volatility.”</p> <p>Session 1: Introduction to your fellow students and course orientation</p> <p>Session 2: Berlin vignettes activity I²</p> <p>Session 3: Lecture: Birds Eye View of the History and Culture of Berlin</p>
Thursday, June 9, 2016	<p>Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory</p> <p>Session 1: Group discussion on reading, Bronfenbrenner (1994): Ecological models of Human Development.</p> <p>Session 2: Berlin vignettes activity II</p> <p>Session 3: Afternoon field trip to <i>Berliner Museum</i> to learn about the history of Berlin</p>
Monday, June 13, 2016	<p>Theories of Personality Change and Individual Transformation</p> <p>Session 1: Group discussion on reading, Donellan, et al., (2015): Personality development across the life span: Current findings and future directions.</p> <p>Session 2: Lecture: Personality and Individual Transformation</p> <p>Session 3: Activity: How the Grinch Stole Berlin³</p>
Thursday, June 16, 2016	<p>Theories of Resilience</p> <p>Session 1: Group discussion on reading, Yates & Masten (2004): Fostering the future: Resilience theory and the practice of positive psychology.</p> <p>Session 2: Lecture: Resilience I</p> <p>Session 3: Lecture: Resilience II</p>
Monday, June 20, 2016	<p>Applying Theory to Practice</p> <p>Session 1: Lecture: Examples of Applying Theory to Practice</p> <p>Session 2: Activity: Delivering Useful Critiques</p> <p>Session 3: Group brainstorming activity for final projects</p>

² In the *Berlin Vignettes Activities*, groups of students will read short stories from the book *Berlin: Portrait of a city through centuries* (MacClean, 2014) on people living in Berlin at a variety of historical times, discuss these essays in groups, and present their analyses of these essays to the rest of the class.

³ The *How the Grinch Stole Berlin* Activity requires the students to watch a clip from a famous American Christmas movie *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and interpret the behavior of The Grinch from various theoretical perspectives.

Thursday, June 23, 2016	<p>Zeitgeist and genius loci</p> <p>Session 1: Lecture: Geographical Place and Historical Time</p> <p>Session 2: Activity: “Timelining your topics”</p> <p>Session 3: Assignment: Elevator Speeches</p>
Monday, June 27, 2016	<p>Resilience through Terror: The Holocaust</p> <p>Session 1: Lecture: Berlin and the Holocaust</p> <p>Session 2: Relating resilience to the atrocities of the Third Reich</p> <p>Session 3: Afternoon field trip to <i>Holocaust Memorial or Topographie des Terrors</i> to experience what it might have been like for individuals living in Berlin during the Holocaust</p>
Thursday, June 30, 2016	<p>Resilience through Persecution: The “Stasi”</p> <p>Session 1: Lecture: Berlin and the Staatssicherheit. How did people cope with surveillance and persecution?</p> <p>Session 2 & 3: Field trip to <i>Berlin-Hohenschönhausen Memorial</i> to learn more about Staatssicherheit and talk to contemporary witnesses.</p>
Monday, July 4, 2016	<p>Resilience through Art: Art and Place</p> <p>Session 1: Movie: <i>Bowie in Berlin</i></p> <p>Session 2: Discussion: Art and Place</p> <p>Session 3: Group Feedback on Project Progress</p>
Thursday, July 7, 2016	<p>Reflections on Personal Projects</p> <p>Session 1: Project Outline Presentations</p> <p>Session 2: Project Outline Presentation Critiques</p> <p>Session 3: Group Discussion: <i>Where do our projects fit into the big picture?</i></p>
Monday, July 11, 2016	<p>Resilience through Community</p> <p>Session 1: Lecture: Community Resilience: What are some of the main characteristics of resilient communities? How is Berlin at the forefront of resilience at the neighborhood level?</p> <p>Session 2 & 3: Field Trip to urban gardening projects in Berlin (<i>Tempelhofer Feld, Prinzessinnengarten</i>)</p>
Thursday, July 14, 2016	<p>Final Thoughts Resilience and Transformation</p> <p>Session 1: Individual Presentations</p> <p>Session 2: Individual Presentations</p> <p>Session 3: Course wrap-up: How do individual characteristics, place, and time influence resilience and personal transformation?</p>

*Other class excursions may occur depending on the summer’s offerings. Dates and subjects for field trips may be adjusted due to the availability and confirmation of the appointments.