



EDUC 497 Special Topics - International Field Experience: Germany (1 - 3 Credits)

Instructors' Information:

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Course Prerequisites: EdPsy 014, EdThP 115

Note: Course credits may be applied to Educational Elective Credits.

General Course Information

Class meeting times: Thursday 6-8:00, starting March 15th, and ending May 3rd

This course consists of three components:

- 1. Pre-Trip Component: Spring Semester:** General background knowledge: in-class and on-line activities (blended model) will provide the student with general background knowledge on Germany with consideration to commerce, industry, social, political, and economic constructs relating to education. Through readings, discussions and on-line resources students will examine the notion of global citizenship and internationalization in terms of education. Students from other campuses will participate via video conferencing. **(1-4 Credits)** Note: This component may be completed without completing components 2 and 3 for 1 credit, or completed with components 2 and 3 [4 credits]).
- 2. Trip Component: Summer:** Students will travel to pre-determined schools (e.g., Freiburg, Hanau, Melsungen) and visit cities that formerly fell within the East and West German borders where the contrasts in political and social influence on education may be obvious (e.g., Eisenach). Students will have the opportunity to participate in classroom interactions (e.g., co-teaching, assist teachers to internationalize their classrooms) at chosen grade levels (i.e., Kindergarten, elementary, middle school and high school levels) participate in formal meetings with political officials, educators, and school administrators as well as informal meetings with students and University peers. Maintenance of a journal and teaching record are required along with participation in all group activities to represent a Penn State contingency. Note: This component must be completed with components 1 and 3 and no option exists to complete this component in isolation of components 1 and 3.
- 3. Post-Trip Component:** Debriefing follow-up session. Students will participate in a follow-up session approximately 1 to 2 weeks following return from Germany to present findings, share impressions, and summarize trip experiences of component 2.

Students with Disabilities:

This course will entail **extensive** walking, good physical health is required. Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you are a student at Berks and require reasonable academic adjustments in this course, please contact **Yuriko Beaman**, Disability Services Coordinator, 153 Franco, 610-396-6410 (ynb1@psu.edu). All other students please see your associated Disability Services Coordinator. For further information regarding The Office of Disability Services, please visit the web site at www.equity.psu.edu/ods/, please notify the instructor as early in the semester as possible regarding reasonable academic adjustments.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide students with exposure to multiple and diverse teaching environments in Germany. Attention will be given to the analysis of teaching settings and the relevant issues that have influenced them. Special consideration will be given to internationalizing classrooms, and an examination of the former East / West German cultures. The German educational culture will be examined comparatively to the United States in terms of educational environments and orientation to the field of Education. The impact of communist rule still remains noticeable in architecture, social issues and economic struggles, specifically in terms of education; such stark dichotomous images will be used to provide a framework for students' comparative analyses. All students completing the course will be assessed on the following objectives:

- Students will use field experiences to reflect on guiding questions: “what is teaching,” “what is learning,” and “what are the purposes of schooling?” Reflections will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of **cultural issues** that have contributed to the current educational structure in a comparative manner (i.e., discussing the United States and Germany).
- Students will identify **social and political variables** that have influenced Germany’s educational system and will discuss these in comparison to similar variables in the United States.
- Students will explore **educational theories of pedagogy** during the field experience and offer personal posits that will **focus on the differences** in school structure in terms of German educational foundations comparatively to the United States.
- Within the context of classroom learning and pedagogy, students will demonstrate an **understanding of global citizenship** concepts and reflect critically on **internationalizing classrooms**.
- Students will offer **future directions regarding education in the U.S.** that critically and creatively consider political, social, economic, educational, and international perspectives.
- Students will identify **similarities and differences among the schools visited** in relation to: school social climate, academic offerings and expectations, academic rigor, student competencies, academic reporting methods, and assumptions about child development and individual differences.

COURSE COMPONENTS

Attendance Policy To be able to interpret and learn from the nuances of the educational settings observed it is critical to **attend** every session (Pre-Trip, Trip and Post-Trip). This class follows the University Faculty Senate Policies for Students (<http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/>).

Accordingly, you are expected to attend every meeting and event, if absences become excessive, the student may be asked to withdraw from the course.

- ***Attending during sessions:*** Students should **participate actively** in sessions by **participating in conversations** to share thoughts, ideas, and insight. If you want to be a teacher, you must be comfortable communicating in front of others! If you are too shy to participate in discussions, your participation points will reflect this; therefore, you are expected to attempt to participate actively (see Participation under “Performance Evaluation Methods”. Stay awake & save texting for a private time outside, and away from all course gatherings. If you fall asleep or text during any professional gathering (school observation or meeting while on the trip) you will be asked to meet with the instructor. For all Pre-Trip in-class sessions please put cell phones on “meeting mode”.

- **Participation mentally and physically is required.** You must communicate comfortably with others to be a teacher. As such, you are expected to be actively involved in all **discussions** and **conversations**. This course is designed to be an interactive class where viewpoints and values are shared and respected.
- **General information:** As part of the student contingency while on this trip, please understand that while traveling outside of the United States, you represent an embodiment of the Pennsylvania State University system and future educators of the United States. As such, you will offer others an impression of Penn State and educators in the United States by your attitude and appearance. Because we will be meeting with professionals in the field and political figures, you should at all times and in all places demonstrate professionalism, courtesy to others, and respect for the country and space that you are in at that moment. You should be punctual for all meetings (Pre-Trip, Trip and Post-Trip), and while on the trip, you should dress and behave appropriately. Guidelines will be shared before departure but you should expect to take office (business) casual dress clothes.
- **General Information on Papers / Projects:** All work is to be done independently, if help is needed please contact the instructor. **Use course-related reading effectively to prepare for the trip.** If you use ideas from any source (including class readings), **credit the source** (a *How to Reference* tool will be posted on ANGEL). Your work should reflect the 400 level of this course. Your work should be on time, free of spelling errors, and original work. Creativity is valued in your work; however deep reflection is required. Your work will be evaluated on the level of thought invested in your work.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION METHODS

- **Pre-Trip Reading Assessments (100 points).** Multiple readings to prepare you for your trip will be posted on ANGEL. You will be assessed on these readings in various ways. For example, you will be required to read each document and may be asked to submit a reflection (double-spaced 12-pt. font; 2 full pages) that reflects in a meaningful way on each reading. Due dates will be posted.
- **Journal Entries: Post Trip (100 points).** Students will keep a **daily dated journal** starting with Pre-Trip and ending with the last gathering of Post-Trip. All entries are to be completed each day and should be submitted after we return to the US at our last Post-Trip meeting. Journal entries should be computer generated free of grammatical and spelling errors and should deeply reflect on:
 - ✂ **What you did / your comfort level** and how it may be changing with time.
 - ✂ **Your first impressions / feelings / fears** and what that means to you. Did it surprise you to respond this way?
 - ✂ **What you observed / things, people, places, smells, tastes,** be descriptive in your writing (paint a verbal picture for someone who wasn't there).
 - ✂ **Where you went / record names of places, cities, sites impressions.** Note: you might consider keeping a master calendar that lists the places visited in sequence for that day, and then you can reflect in journal entry in-depth on those activities at the end of the day.
 - ✂ **Who you met:** record names, titles, addresses and your thoughts and impressions.

- **Presentation (components: Power Point, Poster, Brochure).** Students will prepare a presentation that summarizes the trip experience for you personally in a multi-media format. The presentation should comprehensively cover your trip experience and will include the following components (a 15-minute Power Point presentation, a poster, and a tri-fold brochure = total of 250 points) described next.
 1. **Power Point Presentation (50 points):** Prepare to share your trip experience in power point form. You may include music, video, food, etc. This presentation should highlight your trip (e.g., show / demonstrate what you felt was most meaningful to you through photos, foods, items, student work etc.). Please note: do not try to comprehensively discuss your experience (that is done in the Reflection Project – description follows). (Rubric will be distributed)
 2. **Poster (50 points):** The poster should visually support your Presentation. Posters will be displayed on campus as a way of sharing your discoveries of Education in Germany (Rubric will be distributed).
 3. **Brochure (150 points):** The brochure should accompany the poster and you should be prepared to print 2-dozen brochures for display on campus (Rubric will be distributed).
- **Trip Analysis Reflection Project (250 points):** Project is due at the time of your presentation. You may select from the following projects (or you may propose a project which is subject to approval by the instructor).
 1. **All students** must identify their project intent with the instructor before leaving for Germany.
 2. **All projects** will focus on a comparative analysis of education in Germany based on what you learned (e.g., Pre-Trip and Trip). Be prepared to discuss in-depth your evaluation of how education in Germany vs. the United States is / has been affected by: cultural issues, social and political variables. In your analysis discuss theories of pedagogy specific to schools visited and cities, and discuss your thoughts on what this means (if anything) for education in the future (e.g., what should we be considering in the United States and what seems to you to be most important as we educated children in this global society?). Within this context discuss how you aided German teachers to gain a perspective of education on an international level (e.g., how did you help teachers to internationalize their classrooms? Give examples and provide support and examples when necessary).

Project Options:

- **Reflection Paper:** Paper should be double-spaced, 12-pt. font, 5-7 pages.
- **Portfolio:** Create a professional portfolio that clearly articulates the focus as stated above in #2.
- **Documentary:** Create a video version of the project that clearly articulates the focus as stated above in #2.

GRADING

Although Pre-Trip assignments are required, your depth of understanding will be assessed through journal entries, and Post-Trip assignments, hence the heavy weight on Post-Trip assignments after return from Germany. Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the material presented and **are responsible for completing all assignments, readings and submitting all materials on time**. Missing sessions and missed assignments may result in a failing grade for the class. The point breakdowns are listed below.

COURSE GRADES:

Grades will be assigned on the basis of 100 points for 1 credit **or** 700 points for 4 credits and will be distributed as follows:

Assignments by due date:	Pre-trip	Post-trip
Reading Assessments (Pre-trip only)	100 points	= 100 Points
Journal Entries (Trip)		100 points = 100 points
Presentation: PowerPoint		50 points = 50 points
Presentation: Poster		50 points = 50 points
Presentation: Brochure		150 points = 150 points
Trip Project		250 points = 250 points
Total points for the semester: 1 credit = 100 points		4 credits = 700 points

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

651 - 700	A (93-100%)	539 - 559	C+ (77-79%)
630 - 650	A- (90-92%)	490 - 538	C (70-76%)
609 - 629	B+ (87-89%)	420 - 489	D (60-69%)
581 - 608	B (83-86%)	0 - 419	F (0-59%)
560 - 580	B- (80-82%)		

Teacher Professionalism

The College of Education at Penn State recommends to the Pennsylvania Department of Education only those education graduates who have met the exit criteria for the program and “are known as persons of good moral character, possessing personal qualities, professional knowledge, and skill which warrant issuance of a teacher’s certificate (School Laws of Pennsylvania, Article XII).” Certification candidates also must be United States citizens not in the habit of using narcotic drugs in any form or excessive amounts of intoxicating beverages (School Code 1209), and not currently under indictment nor convicted of a criminal offense (Act 34 and Act 151).

Because it is the responsibility of the faculty to verify that teacher candidates abide by the Professional Code of Conduct, behavior that is not consistent with the values and ethics of professional teachers may require remediation including career advising, referral for personal counseling, additional or repeating of courses, additional field experience placement, or evidence of improvement before progressing through the upper level courses or field experiences. Failure to abide by the Professional Code of Conduct can result in a student’s removal from the elementary education program.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Students, as you take this course you are altering your platform to acknowledge your place in this world as a global citizen. Although you are a part of the Pennsylvania State University system, you are also a part of a wider community of learners and teaching professionals that extends across the globe. With this comes a great deal of responsibility as a learner. One such responsibility is portraying yourself as an ambassador for your institution of higher learning – Penn State! You have made a great choice, and the following guidelines should be kept in mind as you travel internationally and represent your University.

You will be expected to:

- **Attend** all gatherings and arrive on time and dressed appropriately (guidelines to be distributed).
- **Act in a professional manner** at all times and in all places (including the privacy of host homes).
- **Focus your efforts** and address how you can aid German teachers to expand the artificial classroom boundaries set by geographic borders, and offer insightful and practical ways that you as a Penn State student can be instrumental in creating a global network of learners and teachers.
- **Complete** all assignments on time.
- **Monitor your learning** throughout this course by continually referring to the **Guiding Course Questions** at the end of this syllabus. These questions will help you to process what you observe and experience. Use these questions to reflect upon in your journal entries.
- **Print** materials for class as needed and posted assignments as necessary. Check ANGEL for class materials and communications.
- **Understand** that there are **requirements** and expectations specific to this course given the dynamics of the travel and international component, so read the syllabus carefully to understand these requirements and expectations.
- **Accept the consequences** when work is inadequate or late. Don't offer excuses – offer your best!

Guiding Course Questions

As you move through this course, please continue to consider the following questions as you process your experience:

1. What is teaching? What does it mean to be a teacher in a global network?
2. What is learning? What does it mean to *be able to* learn in all settings?
3. What are the purposes of schooling? How does schooling differ based on the social situation?
4. What were the strengths of the instruction and lessons you observed?
5. How do you feel about the lessons and classrooms you observed? What did the instruction look like? Although the language was different, did it seem clear to students? **How** were students learning the skills or content?
6. What additional presentation and activity ideas can you suggest as options for teaching this skill or strategy based on your past perspectives?
7. How did assessment occur in the classroom?
8. How could this lesson be expanded to reflect an international perspective (e.g., texting with international peers, computer or video access, pen pals)?
9. What could you share with the teacher to help connect the students to the world outside of this classroom?

Tentative Itinerary

- **Thursday, May 10 (Day 1)** Flight departs Philadelphia International Airport .
- **Friday-Sunday, May 11-13 (Days 2 – 4): (Sightseeing)**
(2 overnight in Fussen; 1 overnight in Augsburg)
 - **Friday, May 11:** Arrive in Frankfurt. Travel by train to Fussen. Sleep overnight in Fussen.
 - **Saturday, May 12:** Fussen, southern Germany: Neuenschwahnstein and Hohenschwangau Castles. Sleep overnight in Fussen.
 - **Sunday, May 13:** Augsburg, southern Germany. Free time in Augsburg. Sleep overnight in Augsburg.
- **Monday-Tuesday, May 14-15 (Days 5-6): (Destination #1: Hanau)**
(2 overnights in Hanau)
 - **Monday, May 14:** Meet with Hanau school administration / tour schools. Observe / co-teach in Hanau schools: K, GS, HS, or G depending upon student interest. Sleep overnight in Hanau.
 - **Tuesday, May 15:** Observe / co-teach in Hanau schools in AM. Evening travel to Melsungen, central Germany.
- **Wednesday –Saturday, May 16-19 (Days 7-10): (Destination #2: Melsungen)**
(4 overnights in Melsungen)
 - **Wednesday, May 16:** In Melsungen schools: (K, GS, HS, or G depending upon student interest). Meet teachers: observe classes/co-teach.
 - **Thursday, May 17:** In Melsungen schools.
 - **Friday, May 18:** In Melsungen schools.
 - **Saturday, May 19:** Private Castle tour of the Berg Herzberg in Alsfeld central Germany. Evening travel to Eisenach, former East Germany.
- **Sunday - Monday, May 20, 21 (Days 11-12) (Sightseeing: former East Germany; Wartburg Castle; Eisenach, Erfurt).** (3 overnights in Eisenach.)
 - **Sunday, May 20:** Tour Wartburg Castle in AM. Tour Buchenwald Concentration Camp in PM.
 - **Monday, May 21:** Day in Erfurt: Shopping, sightseeing, museums. Free time in Erfurt.
- **Tuesday – Thursday, May 22-24 (Days 13-15): (Destination #3: Freiburg)**
(3 nights in Freiburg)
 - **Tuesday, May 22:** Tour Freiburg Univ., discussion with Univ. peers discuss education system in U.S. / Germany; observe classes; overnight with students in dorms in Freiburg.
 - **Wednesday, May 23:** Tour Freiburg schools: Kindergarten (K)(ages 3-6), elementary school (Grundschule [GS]: grades 1-4), Hauptschule (HS) or Gymnasium (G) depending upon student interest. Overnight with students in dorms.
 - **Thursday, May 24:** In Freiburg schools. Overnight with students in dorms.
- **Friday, May 25 (Day 16)** Return flight to Philadelphia.