

BERLIN PROGRAM

for Advanced German & European Studies

Program Profile

German
Studies
Association **GSA**

Freie Universität



Berlin

GOALS

The Berlin Program for Advanced German and European Studies, initiated by and established at the Freie Universität Berlin in 1986, promotes a new generation of young North American scholars with a specialized knowledge of modern and contemporary Germany and Europe. The program supports scholars in all social science and humanities disciplines, including historians working on German and European history since the mid-18th century. Fellowships are awarded for doctoral dissertation research as well as postdoctoral research. Each year, approximately twelve fellows are selected. The program's mission is two-fold: To contribute to the training of a new generation of young North American scholars specializing in Germany and Europe and to deepen the understanding of German and European political, economic, social and cultural developments in North America.

ACADEMIC PROFILE

The Berlin Program is a residential program which offers a stimulating academic environment at one of Germany's leading research universities. Unlike other fellowship programs, the Berlin Program seeks to provide a vibrant fellowship community. The central core is our biweekly research colloquium where fellows present their research projects. Through our multidisciplinary advisory committee of professors from all universities in Berlin and Potsdam, the Berlin Program has strong ties to many academic institutions. This committee provides a unique network of expertise and facilitates contacts with researchers and institutions.

In placing a high priority in the fellows' academic and cultural immersion in the "field", the program brings together North American fellows and German scholars, intellectuals, and artists. In addition, the program screens films, explores Berlin in city walks and runs theory and methodology workshops. The program's long-running Berlin Walks engage participants in an environment that seems to be in a perpetual state of change. Our theory and methodology workshops seek to advance our ability to communicate across disciplinary borders. Throughout the academic year, the program serves as a base to build cooperation and support between fellows.

RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM

Our colloquium serves as a central meeting point for all fellows to share, discuss and support each other's work. Fellows present their own research project in our colloquium guided by distinguished scholars. Participation in the colloquium allows fellows to reflect on their ongoing research and gain knowledge of current research done in other academic fields. Unlike most academic settings, in which opportunities for truly interdisciplinary dialogue are rare, the Berlin Program deliberately promotes a cross-disciplinary dialogue. Many of the selected projects challenge traditional disciplinary borders, and oftentimes, our ability to communicate. In order to cultivate such exchanges, we organize theory and methodology workshops. Recent themes have been: *What Does "Normal/Normalization" Mean?* (November 2012), *Structure and Agency* (October 2011), *20 Years of Reunification* (November 2010) and *The Berlin Wall Seen through Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (November 2009).

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

In order to foster a deeper understanding of Germany and Europe, our colloquium invites distinguished individuals involved in academic, cultural, and public affairs. Among our guests have been Christa Wolf, Adriana Altaras, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Marion Brasch, Joachim Gauck, Carsten D. Voigt, Robert Leicht, Necla Kelek, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Klaus von Beyme and Charlotte Frank (one of the architects of the Bundeskanzleramt).

EYE ON FILM

Film plays a significant role in the cultural and intellectual life in Germany. The films chosen engage with historical, social and cultural issues and offer a glimpse into both historic and contemporary German films. In the past, we have discussed *Titos Brille* (2016), *Sommer vorm Balkon* (2015), *Raus aus der Haut* (2014), *Herr Lehmann* (2014), *Eins, zwei, drei* (2013), *Der Turm* (2012) and *Boxhagener Platz* (2011).

BERLIN WALKS

The name of our program refers to the place of its home: Berlin. Berlin's urban structure has been likened to a palimpsest. A veritable treasure trove for architectural historians and urban planners, Berlin lends itself to a variety of explorations. A thematic walk once a year offers an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of this complex environment where politics, history, culture and art meet. Recent walks have explored: *Public art commissioned for Berlin's 750th anniversary* (2015), *Berlin Replicata: Architectural Copying in the Capital City* (2014), *Places of Tranquility/Spaces for Reflection* (2012), *Politics and Architecture: Rebuilding Berlin after World War II* (2010), *90 Years of Bauhaus* (2009).

ORIENTATION AND SERVICES

Berlin Program fellows are enrolled at the Freie Universität Berlin, enjoy access to faculty, libraries and all other services. Fellows are provided with communication infrastructure and the assistance of an academic coordinator. The program offers both general and academic orientation meetings which are designed to facilitate a smooth transition to academic life in Berlin. The general orientation provides step-by-step assistance with all organizational matters. As Berlin has one of the densest clusters of universities, research institutions and archives in Europe, the academic orientation provides an overview of the academic landscape, its structure and culture.

AWARDS, ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

The program accepts applications from U.S. and Canadian nationals, and permanent or long-term residents. Applicants for a dissertation fellowship must be full-time graduate students who have completed all coursework required for the Ph.D. and must have achieved ABD status. Also eligible are U.S. and Canadian Ph.D.s who have received their doctorates within the past two calendar years. Awards provide between ten and twelve months of research support and a travel allowance.

The selection of fellows is a transatlantic process. Applications will be reviewed by a multidisciplinary committee of distinguished scholars from both sides of the Atlantic.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

The Berlin Program is based at, funded and administered by the Freie Universität Berlin, one of the nation's leading research universities and one of the winners in the Excellence Initiative. With its wide spectrum of subjects, multifaceted research activities, and its extensive system of more than 40 libraries, the FU Berlin offers an outstanding environment for research and study. Fellows are expected to connect to this rich network of expertise during their research stay. Essential to the program's mission is our close cooperation with our North American partner, the German Studies Association (www.thegsa.org).

Founded in 1976 as a professional association of scholars in German, Austrian, and Swiss history, literature, art, cultural studies, political science, and economics, the GSA has been instrumental in the generation and dissemination of new knowledge on key social, cultural, and political issues through its conferences and publications. Beyond our collaboration in selecting winning applications, our cooperation provides multiple opportunities for scholarly exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The annual Berlin Program GSA Distinguished Lecture and Summer Workshop at the Freie Universität Berlin as well as our Berlin Program Alumni Panel at the GSA's annual conference in North America are part of our effort to feature and support exceptional scholarship in German and European Studies.

STRENGTHS AND IMPACT

Since the program's establishment at the Freie Universität Berlin in 1986 it has supported more than 300 scholars and has helped educate some of the most eminent scholars in the field. An alumni survey conducted in 2011 measuring academic trajectories showed that most respondents now teach at major research universities and colleges in the U.S., Canada and beyond. The overwhelming majority of respondents rated the opportunity provided by the fellowship to be instrumental to their professional life. Highly productive connections with German academics and institutions (universities and research institutes such as the WZB, the ZZF, the DIW, and Max Planck institutes) and other fellows often resulted in cooperation or joint publications. A large majority of alumni surveyed reported one or more of their publications supported by the Berlin Program. Many alumni remain connected and actively shape and participate in the program's events.

ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

Connections with the Berlin Program do not stop after the fellowship period in Berlin. Our Summer Workshops and the GSA Distinguished Lecture here at the FU Berlin, as well as our Alumni Panels at the annual GSA conference, serve as sites for critical engagement. Through these events we seek to strengthen ties between fellows, alumni and the academic community in Berlin and beyond. Berlin Program events in recent years have been:

Alumni Roundtable at the GSA, Washington, D.C. October 4, 2015: *Writing Histories of Germans Abroad: Approaches and Methodologies to German Sources on Africa and the Middle East*

Summer Workshop, June 18-19, 2015: *Violence, Oppression and Civil Disobedience: From the Cold War Past to the Neoliberal Present*

GSA Distinguished Lecture, Joy Calico. Vanderbilt University/GSA, June 30, 2015: *Arnold Schoenberg's A Survivor from Warsaw in Postwar Europe: Musical Remigration and Holocaust Commemoration*

Alumni Panel 2014: *Integration in Theory and Practice, 1960-2010*

Summer Workshop 2014: *Virtual Germans*

GSA Distinguished Lecture 2014: *Orientalism and the Classical Tradition in Germany*

Alumni Roundtable 2013: *Studying Memory: Methodologies and Tools for Research*

Summer Workshop 2013: *Germany Looks East*

GSA Distinguished Lecture 2013: *Old Glory und Berliner Bär. Die USA und West-Berlin 1948–1994*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - UPCOMING IN 2016

Summer Workshop, June 23-25, 2016: *Becoming TransGerman: Transnational, Transdisciplinary, Transgender, Transhuman*

GSA Distinguished Lecture, Irene Kacandes, Dartmouth College/GSA, June 30, 2016: *Memory Work for/in the 21st Century*

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