



Be your own Berlin? – City Marketing and urban performance in tourism

Winter Semester 2021/22: 18 October 2021 - 19 February 2022

CATEGORY

Urban Culture

COURSE STRUCTURE

The seminar is conceptualised for the classroom and beyond on a basis of two contact hours (45 min each) per week for the duration of the semester (16 weeks). Field trips will accompany the classroom sessions to apply and test developed content. They will be composed of three-hour blocks. The seminar will incorporate digital formats and may switch to an online format due to regulations as applicable.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Time

Wednesdays, 12-14 c.t. (12.15 am – 1.45 pm)

Place

Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, 10117 Berlin
Room 0323-26

COURSE LANGUAGE

The language spoken in the classroom is English, although depending on participants' abilities German material will be included. For presentations and essay writing, a good command of the English language is essential (B2).

Language requirements (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
English B-level (B2-B1) knowledge is essential. German B-level is helpful, but not required.

TARGET GROUP

International exchange students of all subjects with a strong interest in the course topic. Berlin Perspectives courses are designed for undergraduate students. Master students may participate if their home university agrees. Regular degree-seeking students can select the course within the elective part of their study program (überfachlicher Wahlpflichtbereich üWP).

This seminar targets students of all subject areas and disciplines with a strong interest in cultural research.

CREDITS = 5 ECTS

The Berlin Perspectives courses are offered by the Career Center as part of the elective program üWP. Registration takes place via Agnes.

All courses are accredited according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Registration on Moodle (HU's e-learning platform)

in case of online classes

- Fully functional device (laptop, tablet, PC)
- Stable internet connection
- Software: Zoom (video/audio)
- *Recommended* hardware: external headset for better sound quality

EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Preparation for lively discussions: be on time, have at least the required readings completed, and points in mind for discussion or clarification.

Assignments: complete all assignments according to the specified requirements on the schedule including handing them over to the lecturer.

Commitment: pay particular attention to the lecturer and respect differences of opinions (classmates', lecturers).

Academic guidelines: Comply with academic integrity policies (such as no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical) especially the academic honor code and the student code of conduct.

Attendance policy: Students must contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work – to excuse absence please contact the lecturer.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

With the advent of the Covid pandemic, scholars have identified a transformative moment in the history of tourism, arguing for a rare opportunity to escape the unsustainable global tourism path (Higgins-Desbiolles 2020; Ioannides and Gyimóthy 2020). The industry is forced to develop new touristic concepts based on post-pandemic parameters. In this course, we explore the contemporary utilisation of typical Berlin discourses in the context of tourism and city marketing. Together, we will discuss the commodification of economic developments, political activism and environmental concerns. In an application of our seminar findings, we will go on self-developed and themed tours of Berlin addressing contemporary urban discourses centring on smart city, participation, touristification and urban activism. By testing different approaches to experiencing and sensing the city, we critically examine the basis of diverse ways of "knowing Berlin".

In small groups, we will develop and analyse contents and methods of explorative walking performances based on specific contemporary Berlin discourses and urban projects. The outcome feeds into participant presentations during the tours. In addition, participants will be asked to document reflections on different aspects of the tours in a logbook they keep over the duration of the seminar. Finally, participants will reflect on a self-developed topic in a longer final piece that needs to contain a written component of appr. 20.000 characters.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The objectives of this course are closely linked to the specific theme of the course. First, students will gain an understanding of current tourism research discourses concerning sustainability and the future of tourism post-COVID. With reference to contemporary Berlin, students will learn to identify main research parameters, discuss, and apply their knowledge. Moreover, they will encounter research designs and parameters from the younger field of performance studies.

In so doing, they are forced to integrate and handle a diverse set of data and forms of knowledge. As an interdisciplinary group, they will practice to communicate across disciplines and apply collaborative learning tools. Moreover, they are held to search for different modes to translate their research findings for a non-academic audience.

Another aspect of this course concerns transferable skills such as the practice and improvement of communication skills in the context of academic research and analysis. In a mixed-method approach, students will find numerous means to expand their knowledge and command of the English language.

READINGS

Bernt, M., Grell, B., Holm, A. (2013) Eds. The Berlin Reader: A compendium on urban change and activism. Transcript, Bielefeld. Online:

<https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/25376/1004720.pdf?sequence=1>

Higgins-Desbiolles, Freya (2020) Socialising tourism for social and ecological justice after COVID-19, *Tourism Geographies*, 22:3, 610-623.

Ioannides, Dimitri & Szilvia Gyimóthy (2020) The COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity for

escaping the unsustainable global tourism path, *Tourism Geographies*, 22:3, 624-632.

Rohde, K., d'Auria, V. (2018) Building Cosmopolitan Citizenship Through the Mundane: Insights from Walking Conversations in the Public Spaces of Berlin. *European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes*, 1(1), 33–52. <https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.2612-0496/8510>

Whybrow, N. (2020) Ed. *Urban Sensographies*. Routledge, London.

<https://aporee.org/mfm/#about>

<https://transitioninitiative.org/search-initiatives/?country=de>

<https://smart-city-berlin.de/en/>

ASSIGNMENT INFO

Workload and assignments

In order to be granted 5 ECTS, participants will be asked to

- actively attend all sessions (a minimum of 75% attendance is required for classroom and online sessions)
- prepare and revise the classroom/online sessions
- hand in the following **assignments**:
 - presentation in class and during the tours (10 min max)
 - a multimodal log-book containing reflections on classroom work (incl. audio and video pieces)
 - a longer final piece of academic work that includes a written reflection on a self-developed research question (approx. 20.000 characters incl. spaces)

Failure to fulfil one of the mentioned components results in failure of the class.

Assessment Components

The final grade will be composed of the above-mentioned assignments.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Maria Hetzer, PhD

As an anthropologist and performance researcher, Maria Hetzer works for different cultural organisations and universities such as Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Universität Siegen and University of Warwick. Her main areas of expertise concern crisis research, rural anthropology and tourism studies. In her practice-based PhD from the University of Warwick (UK), she explored memory culture on the everyday life of women in the context of 1989 in the GDR and its potential for intercultural translation in performance. For her MA thesis in performance and anthropology at the University of Leipzig, she conducted field research about the impact of tourism on cultural identity politics. Since then, Maria has primarily studied the numerous ways in which land reform, collectivisation and modernisation have changed rural everyday life in the GDR and beyond for the DFG NCN projects "Rooms for Manoeuvre in State Socialism". Currently based in Berlin, she is also engaged in research on performance walking for tourists and inhabitants.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Course introduction

Getting to know each other and clarifying admin matters; introduction to relevant research discourses and topics, such as approaches from urban performance research and tourism studies to the commodification of culture

Week 2: THEMATIC INTRODUCTION: "Transforming the city through participation"

Introduction to the Berlin-specific discourse on commons and the right to the city, transition town movement, raw culture and other projects; public participation in decision making processes on the future development of Berlin's infrastructure

Week 3: Methods & tools for "transformercity"

Translating activist concerns into playful performative interventions; playful politics and city marketing strategies

Week 4: Workshop

Development of tour elements for "TRANSFORMERCITY"

Week 5: FIELD TRIP "Transformercity"

Thematic tour including participant presentations

Week 6: THEMATIC INTRODUCTION TO "Sensing the city"

Introduction to research on tourism and the body; urban soundscapes and sound walks, urban stories of the body and the anthropology of the senses

Week 7: METHODS & TOOLS for “sensing the city”

Somatic approaches to the urban fabric and performances of identity in “travel to self”-experiences

Week 8: WORKSHOP

Development of tour elements for “Sensible city”

Week 9: FIELD TRIP: “SENSABLE CITY”

Thematic tour including participant presentations

Week 10: INTRODUCTION “Smart City Berlin”

Introduction to the smart city discourse and the digital drive in infrastructure management in Berlin

Week 11: METHODS & TOOLS “Smart City Berlin”

How can we experience the digital future of Berlin in tourism today? Performance research methods applied

Week 12: WORKSHOP

Development of tour elements for “Smart City Berlin”

Week 13: FIELD TRIP “SMART CITY BERLIN”

Thematic tour including participant presentations

Week 14: EVALUATION of Tours

Performance walking and its potential to experience and showcase alternative modes of being in the city. Participant discussion on future research designs

Week 15: METHODS & TOOLS Team writing

Showcasing progress of final assignments in class and discussion of potential questions, issues and concerns.

Week 16: SEMINAR WRAP UP

Seminar feedback and evaluation, Zukunftswerkstatt

The course and its syllabus are subject to change. Last update: 07 Sep 2021