

# German History – Bismarck to Weimar Republic

## (An OLLI German Language Course)

**Instructors:** Bill Holstein and Jim Weiher

**Timing:** Fall Semester, 2019 (Wednesday 10:15-11:15)

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**URL (this semester):** <http://www1.udel.edu/LLL/language/deutsch/handouts/history/>

**Note:** Documents and video URLs for the Fall-2018 and Spring-2019 semesters are located at:

<http://www1.udel.edu/LLL/language/deutsch/handouts/history/fall-2018/>

<http://www1.udel.edu/LLL/language/deutsch/handouts/history/spring-2019/>

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Week	Topic
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1-2	Robert Blum und die Revolution
3-4	Karl Marx und der Klassenkampf
5-6	Otto von Bismarck und das Zweite Reich
7-8	Der Märchenkönig Ludwig II. und die Bayern
9-10	Kaiser Wilhelm II. und der Welt
11-12	Gustav Stresemann und die Weimarer Republik
13	Rosa Luxemburg und die Freiheit

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### Overview

This is the third and final semester of a three-semester series of courses at OLLI-Wilmington covering German History from the age of Charlemagne (about 750 AD) through Gustav Stresemann and the Weimar Republic (1930). During Fall, 2019 we will cover the period following the fall of the Holy Roman Empire (First Reich) and defeat of Napoleon and prior to the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich (about 1815-1930). This period includes several governments: the German Confederation, the North German Confederation, The German Empire (Second Reich), and the Weimar Republic.

The courses are built around a series of German language videos and associated German language "Learning Material" produced by ZDF, a German television network. The videos were first broadcast nationally in 2008 and 2010. Since then they have been used, together with the Learning Material, in German high schools in support of the teaching of German History.

## Course Objectives

The OLLI "German History" courses are first and foremost German Language courses directed towards participants with an intermediate to advanced understanding of German who wish to improve their understanding of the German language, in particular their listening comprehension. The topical information will be presented primarily in German, while any important information on the course structure will be conveyed in English. Videos will be played at a slightly reduced speed (85%) to help with listening comprehension. Complementary German language power point presentations aim to provide context to the videos as well as to fill in gaps between the topics covered in the videos. In addition, to help participants improve their reading and listening skills, an extensive compilation of German vocabulary (with English translations) has been compiled for the main videos and is available online. Participants are not required to speak German in class. All oral participation is strictly voluntary.

A second objective of the course is to convey information to all – from intermediate-level students of German to those fluent in the language – concerning the long and fascinating history that led to modern-day Germany. Native-born speakers and those with knowledge of German history are encouraged to provide their additional insights and thoughts (preferentially in German) on the subject matter covered throughout the course.

The third and final objective is to have fun and to learn at your own pace in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

## Available Online Course Content (Videos and Supporting Documentation)

Seven topics (historical figures) will be covered during the course – 2 weeks for each of six topics and one week for the remaining topic. Videos used in class with German subtitles added by the instructor are available on a USB flash drive from the instructor. Videos are also available on YouTube (different subtitle sets) and without subtitles on the ZDF German television website: <https://www.zdf.de/>. (For the Bismarck video, click on "Suche", type "Bismarck" and "Die Deutschen" into "Suchbegriff eingeben", and then click on the "Suchen" button.)

The following information is available at the course website:

- A copy of the German-language Learning Material (**LM**) provided by ZDF, the first two sections of which are also provided as a handout in class. It is recommended that participants read the first two sections (typically about 4-6 pages) during the two weeks that the topic is covered. The first section provides a brief description of the video, while the second section provides additional historical information.
- A vocabulary [Wortschatz (**WS**)] document containing many of the German words and phrases that appear in the video. This is provided in both PDF and Word (docx) formats.
- A text file of the German language subtitles (**ST**) and the timing for their appearance in the video for the version of the video with instructor-provided subtitles shown in class.