

GRMN 390 Special Topics
College of Charleston
Frühlingssemester 2015

Professor Corey L. Twitchell
843-953-5341
twitchellcl@cofc.edu

**Kafka's Critters & Creatures:
Das Tierische, das Kreatürliche und das Menschliche
im Werk Franz Kafkas**

Section: GRMN 390.001

Meetings: MW 3:25-4:40 p.m. in Maybank Hall 207

Office Hours: T 1:00-3:00 p.m., W 10:00-11:00am, and by appointment in LONG 429

Required Texts:

Available at bookstore:

Robert Crumb, *Kafka* (ISBN-10: 1560978066)

Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (ISBN-10: 3868732667)

All others texts will be available in PDF format on OAKS.

Final Exam Period: Friday, May 1, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Course Description:

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed the basic language sequence and wish to continue their study of German language and culture. The class aims to introduce students to the literary works of German Jewish author Franz Kafka. As a point of entry into Kafka's oeuvre, we will explore first and foremost his depictions of animals and animal-human composites. In Kafka's novella "The Metamorphosis," the most famous of these hybrids, Gregor Samsa, undergoes a seemingly inexplicable transformation from human into insect-like creature. But Gregor is not an isolated case; Kafka's stories abound with critters and creatures of all sorts. In this course, we will encounter not only Kafka's human-turned-insect, but also other creatures: singing mice, talking philosopher monkeys, and burrowing moles with attitude problems. Our encounter with these literary creatures will allow us to explore what they can teach us about ourselves. Kafka's works have endured in part for their ability to provoke conversations and debates about universal subjects: the human psyche, modern identity and society, the experience of being a minority, the role of the outcast, and many others. As one of the most famous German-language authors of all time, Kafka continues to be translated and has found eager readers not only in Europe and North America, but also in South America, Africa, and Asia. His works have also inspired countless adaptations and retellings. His tales, often perceived as uncanny and ominous, have been re-framed in many other media, perhaps most notably in the form of the graphic novel. In this course, we will not only navigate original short stories by Kafka, but we will also watch films, read graphic novels, and ponder illustrations, inspired by Kafka's critters. Multimedia texts and class discussion in German.

Course Goals:

Course participants will

1. acquire a nuanced understanding of how Kafka wrote by examining in detail texts written from the perspective of animals and animal-hybrids that appear in the author's stories.
2. learn to discuss and analyze literary and philosophical texts in German through the lens of Kafka and his contemporaries.
3. learn to identify and examine basic principles of narrative and narration as they appear in literary texts.
4. recognize, articulate, and explain similarities and differences between original texts by Kafka and adaptations of his stories in other media, such as the graphic novel and film.
5. continue their acquisition and increase their command of the German language through a variety of reading, speaking, listening, and writing activities.
6. gain confidence in reading authentic German texts as they begin to recognize and comprehend more complex discursive structures in written German.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes:

I. Research and Communication in Multiple Media and Languages, including proficiency in: Foreign Language

Organized around different topics and themes, each iteration of this course continues to develop students' proficiency in the language beyond the third year of our language sequence (101-314). Conducted entirely in German, the course improves students' German reading and writing skills as well as their spoken German and listening comprehension. The goal is to improve every student's proficiency level.

IV. International and Intercultural Perspectives: Experiencing, understanding, and using multiple cultural perspectives

This course explores literary texts, cultural readings, and media from German language cultures and thus necessarily promotes an understanding of multiple cultural perspectives from different German-speaking nations and from the different minority groups within those nations.

These outcomes will be assessed in the midterm examination.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Participation/ <i>aktive Teilnahme</i> & pop quizzes	15%
<i>schriftliche Aufgaben</i>	20%
Midterm exam/ <i>Zwischenprüfung</i>	15%
Projects (3)	25%
Final project/ <i>Schlußprojekt</i>	25%

Grade Scale:

100-93 A	87-83 B	77-73 C	67-66 D
92-90 A-	82-80 B-	72-70 C-	65 D-
89-88 B+	79-78 C+	69-68 D+	64-0 F

Attendance and Participation:

A major factor in the steady progress of acquiring proficiency in a foreign language is sustained practice. It is therefore imperative that you attend every class and complete all reading and written assignments. Your participation in the class means that you arrive on time, are prepared for the day's work, and contribute to a positive learning environment by your active participation.

***You may miss two (2) classes (the equivalent of one week's worth of instruction) unexcused without penalty. After that, each missed class period will drop your participation grade by a half full grade unless accompanied by a valid excuse.

Valid excuses entail a two-step process: 1) notification from the Associate Dean of Students. You may fill out the absence form either at 67 George Street or online at: <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/services/absence.php> and 2) consultation with me.

***An excuse will be deemed valid (i.e. an excused absence) only when accompanied by a valid excuse notification AND in consultation with me. **Should you miss class and should I receive a notice in the form of an email from the Absence Memo Office, this is an important first step, but the absence is still not an excused one until you have discussed the absence and consulted with me concerning work and material missed.**

Accommodations will be made for College-approved religious holidays and students with SNAP certification in individual consultation with me.

Participation in this class means:

- Active participation in group or partner work; effort to speak *only* German and to remain on task during group activities.
- Preparation for class including appropriate questions about the reading and possible pop quizzes.
- **Texting** or using your laptop to do anything other than to take notes during class will lead to your receiving a "0" in class participation for that day. **I reserve the right to ask students who engage in texting to leave class.** Should you find yourself in an emergency situation that necessitates the potential use of your cellular device during class, you must alert me at the beginning of class in order to gain permission to be exempt from this regulation. Engaging in texting during class constitutes an affront to both me the instructor and your fellow students. We can all help foster a productive classroom environment by showing each other respect and being present rather than perpetually distracted. As far as I am concerned, Benjamin's concept of *Zerstreuung* does not apply to text exchanges.

Note: Reading/Viewing/Homework assignments listed under a specific day in the syllabus should be completed by class time on that day.

Readings and Study Questions:

With the exception of the two texts listed on the first page of this syllabus, all texts for this course will be available on OAKS in PDF format. You should expect up to six hours of work outside of class. This time includes reading the assigned text for a given class session, composing answers to study questions (worksheets on OAKS) and preparing questions and observations (in German) for class discussion. Periodically, I will administer at the beginning of class a reading quiz that will test your knowledge and comprehension of the material assigned for that day.

Projects:

In order to provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate your mastery of the topics and texts in this course, there will be three (3) projects that target different aspects of the course material: one brief summary or *Zusammenfassung*, to be composed in German, of one of the texts that we read and discuss in class; two textual analyses or *Textanalysen* that you will compose in response to two separate texts that we read and discuss in class. In contrast to the summary, the textual analyses will require you to develop an interpretation of and an argument about one of Kafka's texts. Have no fear: as we progress in the course, we will discuss how to articulate an analysis of a text in German and will practice developing this skill within the context of classroom discussion.

One of the two analyses will be submitted as a VoiceThread presentation, similar to a *Referat*. We will go as a class in the first weeks of the semester to the Language Resource Center to practice using this application. Late work will be graded down a half grade per 24 hours late.

Midterm Exam:

The midterm examination will be an in-class exam based on the material up to that point in the semester.

Final Project/Schlußprojekt:

The final project provides students an opportunity to engage with the material and themes of the semester in a creative and analytical manner. Like a final exam, it is cumulative, but unlike a regular written final, it allows you flexibility and creativity as you construct your project. Throughout the semester, we will discuss a number of adaptations of Kafka's texts and the final project will allow you to develop an adaptation of your own.

Some basic ground rules for the course:

- »It is expected that you will show courtesy towards other speakers in this class.
- »If you want to continue a discussion with me outside of class, or if you fall behind, please come to one of my office hours, or make an appointment. That's why I am here.
- »You may ask either myself or one of the tutors at the Study Skills Lab for help with your written work. All other outside assistance is considered plagiarism. Plagiarizing ideas from books, websites, or other sources and submitting written work that is not your own is a violation of the College of Charleston's Honor Code and will be prosecuted.
- »If you are experiencing any difficulties in this class, please do come see me. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus, and I am also available to make an appointment with you.
- »If you feel unprepared on any given day, please contact me. Do not miss class because you feel unprepared.

Academic Honor Code:

You are expected to be aware of, and abide by, all the College's Honor Code:

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the College Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor.

A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged.

The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz, and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cellular phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at <http://jinr.people.cofc.edu/honorcode.pdf>

Students Needing Access Parity (SNAP):

If there is a student in this class who has a documented disability and has been approved to receive accommodations through SNAP Services, please feel free to come and discuss this with me during my office hours.

SEMESTERPLAN

THEMA 1: KAFKAS TIERE & KREATUREN

1. WOCH

Montag, den 12. Januar

Einführung: Wer war Kafka? Warum Kafka lesen? Was hat er geschrieben? Was ist mit den Tieren los?

Mittwoch, den 14. Januar
zum Lesen:

Kafkas Fabeln und Aphorismen
Franz Kafka, „Kleine Fabel“ (OAKS)

2. WOCH

Montag, den 19. Januar

UNTERRICHT FÄLLT AUS: DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY!

Mittwoch, den 21. Januar
zum Lesen:

Odradek: ein ontologisches Rätsel
Franz Kafka, „Die Sorge des Hausvaters“ (OAKS)
Robert Crumb, *Kafka* (S. 3-28)
1. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

3. WOCH

Montag, den 26. Januar
zum Lesen:

Das Tier als menschliche Erfindung
Franz Kafka, „Eine Kreuzung“ und „Der neue Advokat“ (OAKS)
Robert Crumb, *Kafka* (S. 29-56)
2. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

Mittwoch, den 28. Januar
zum Lesen:

Das Tier als Vermittler
Franz Kafka, „Schakale und Araber“ (OAKS)
Robert Crumb, *Kafka* (S. 57-87)
3. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

4. WOCH

Montag, den 2. Februar
zum Lesen:

Das wie ein Mensch sprechende Tier
Franz Kafka, „Ein Bericht für eine Akademie“ (OAKS)
Robert Crumb, *Kafka* (S. 88-126)
4. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

Mittwoch, den 4. Februar
zum Lesen:

Das Tier als Architekt: „Der Bau“
Franz Kafka, „Der Bau“ (OAKS)
Robert Crumb, *Kafka* (S. 127-175)
5. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

5. WOCH

Montag, den 9. Februar

Das Tier als psychologisches Subjekt: „Der Bau“ 2

zum Lesen:

Franz Kafka, „Der Bau“ (OAKS)
Deleuze und Guattari, Auszüge aus *Kafka: Für eine kleine Literatur* (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

6. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

THEMA 2: KAFKAS MENSCH: EIN MODERNES TIER?

Mittwoch, den 11. Februar
zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Ein Mensch wird zum Tier: *Die Verwandlung*
Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (erster Teil)
**1. Projekt: Zusammenfassung eines Kafka-
Textes**

6. WOCHE

Montag, den 16. Februar
zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Ein Mensch wird zum Tier: *Die Verwandlung*
Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (zweiter Teil)
7. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

Mittwoch, den 18. Februar
zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Ein Mensch wird zum Tier: *Die Verwandlung*
Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* (dritter Teil)
8. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

7. WOCHE

Montag, den 23. Februar
zum Lesen:

Wiederholung für die Zwischenprüfung
Wiederholung für die Zwischenprüfung

Mittwoch, den 25. Februar
zum Lernen:

Zwischenprüfung
Lernen Sie für die Zwischenprüfung

8. WOCHE

UNTERRICHT FÄLLT AUS—FRÜHLINGSPAUSE

9. WOCHE

Montag, den 9. März

Reading Day

Mittwoch, den 11. März
zum Lesen:

***Die Verwandlung* als Graphic Novel**
Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung*

10. WOCHE

Montag, den 16. März
zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Der Mensch im Käfig
Franz Kafka, „Ein Hungerkünstler“ (OAKS)
7. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

Mittwoch, den 18. März

UNTERRICHT FÄLLT AUS—Reading Day!

11. WOCHE

Montag, den 23. März

**Kleist: Kafkas künstlerisches Vorbild?
Visionen einer Katastrophe**

zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Heinrich von Kleist, „Das Erdbeben in Chili“ (OAKS)
8. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

Mittwoch, den 25. März:

**Kafka als Intertext und literarische
Anspielung**

zum Lesen:

Yoko Tawada, Die zweite Vorlesung zum Thema
Verwandlungen „Schrift einer Schildkröte, oder das
Problem der Übersetzung“ (OAKS)

zum Schreiben:

9. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

12. WOCHE

Montag, den 30. März

zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Bilder des Schreckens: Die Animalisierung des Menschen

Franz Kafka, „In der Strafkolonie“ (OAKS)

2. Projekt: Textanalyse 1

Mittwoch, den 01. April

zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Die Instrumentalisierung des Menschen als Vorahnung des Holocaust?

Franz Kafka, „In der Strafkolonie“ (OAKS)

10. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

13. WOCHE

Montag, den 06. April

zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Bilder des Schreckens: Nach dem Holocaust ein Gedicht zu schreiben—barbarisch?

Paul Celan, „Todesfuge“ und andere Gedichte (OAKS)

11. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

Mittwoch, den 8. April:

DEPARTMENTAL ASSESSMENT

14. WOCHE

Montag, den 13. April

zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Tiere als Volk?

Franz Kafka, „Josefine, oder das Volk der Mäuse“ (OAKS)

3. Projekt: Textanalyse 2

Mittwoch, den 15. April

zum Lesen:

zum Schreiben:

Kafka und Film

Franz Kafka, „Ein Landarzt“ (OAKS) und Koji

Yamamura, カフカ 田舎医者 (*Kafuka: Inaka Isha*)

(YouTube)

17. schriftliche Aufgabe (OAKS)

15. WOCHE

Montag, den 20. April

zum Lesen:
zum Schreiben:

Der Text als psychologisches Symptom

Franz Kafka, „Das Urteil“ (OAKS)

18. schriftliche Aufgabe

Mittwoch, den 22. April

zum Lesen:

Vorbereitung der Schlußprojekte

Hinweise zum Schlußprojekt

16. WOCHE

Montag, den 27. April

Schlußgespräch und Vorbereitung auf die Vorstellung der Schlußprojekte