



Georgia Tech · Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts
School of Literature,
Media, and Communication



Syllabus for LMC 3234

Travel Writing in Metz and Alsace-Lorraine: Navigating the Art and Science of War and Peace

Instructor Information

Instructor

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General Information

Description

With Gallo-Roman ruins, art museums, sweeping cathedrals, winding water ways, mysterious passages, and the ghosts of three recent major wars haunting the streets and surrounding landscapes, Metz and the Lorraine region offer an interesting conversation between war and peace that may be compelling to diversity of artistic and historical sensibilities. We will process this sensorial experience through the genre of travel writing. Travel Writing is an exciting reflection on travel by connecting with foreign places through our unique, personal perspectives. Travel writing is not neutral or objective. But it isn't fiction either. You will be constantly asked to make comparisons between your cultural experiences and observations with ones made in France. Renowned travel writer Pico Iyer claims that "We travel, initially, to lose ourselves; and we travel, next, to find ourselves." For our topic, we must consider that war destroys lives but also familiarity and tradition. However, in the wake of peace, creation abounds. New landscapes, design, art, history, and ways of thinking reflect the shifts in consciousness after war. This course will help you produce clear, expressive prose, sharpen your eye for travel detail, and cultivate your individual voice through the lens of art and history shaped by the painful events in war, but also by the rich culture developed in peace, in Metz, the Lorraine, and Alsace.

These core goals of the class align well with GT's new strategic plan outlined here:
<https://strategicplan.gatech.edu/focus/global>

Content: What to Expect in This Class

We will take walking excursions and visits to artistic sites, churches, and museums in Metz that house some of the most beautiful works in France. We will contemplate our futures at the Roman ruins in the German city of Trier. We will connect to soldiers by climbing the trenches and staring at bones in Verdun. We will walk the blurry lines between German and French identity in also have guest speakers: writers and artists, if possible. You will also gain an awareness of the travel writing genre from both a historical, literary and a commercial perspective by exploring different modes and mediums of traveling writing—blogs, videos, essays, photography...

You will work closely with other students, giving and receiving tailored feedback in writing workshops, and have one-on-one conferences with the professor. At the end of some weeks, students will turn in a travel essay on one of the themes covered. As such, students in this class will also work on their own multimedia portfolio of travel writing and, in doing so, develop a greater awareness of their own writer's voice and sharpen their narrative and descriptive powers. The final class group project, a Metz and Lorraine GTE Travel Blog will be an indelible artifact of your unique study abroad experience that you can share with family, friends, the world...

This semester, we will also participate in a pilot project in which you will contribute to the new GTE newspaper.

We will cover different subject units with different themes that are unique to the city of Metz and the region, which include: Culture Shock (or Not); The Past as Present, The People You Meet; Integrating Images with Text; Art Exhibitions and Museums; Historical Landmarks (or others by students' suggestions).

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

- Through course readings and discussions, students will demonstrate knowledge of the origins and types of travel writing.
- Students will be able to conduct close textual analyses of selected travel writing.
- Through course readings and discussions, students will demonstrate knowledge of the moral and ethical issues involved in the act of writing about other cultures.
- Through course readings and their own written work, students will show an understanding of narrative structure, as well as the importance of style, voice and ethos in the genre of travel writing.
- Write lucid, well-constructed arguments analyzing and interpreting texts.
- Synthesize primary and secondary readings to write an extended paper on the course theme.
- Students will utilize their own travel writing as a tool for analysis of cultural and political issues relevant to Metz, Alsace-Lorraine, and France.
- Understand basic concepts of intercultural sensitivity, worldview structures and mindful learning
- Situate Metz, France and the Grand Est region and Europe in broad historical, cultural, and geopolitical contexts
- Develop and sharpen critical thinking skills and apply them to concepts and debates around identity, globalization, and notions of globalism and global citizenship
- Understand and analyze socio-cultural and political developments and current societal debates in France and Europe and be capable of considering these phenomena in cross-cultural, cross-regional and cross-national contexts

Course Requirements & Grading

Individual assignments and their point values are given below:

- Travel Journal: 15%
- Travel essay 1: 10%
- Travel essay 2 + newspaper: 20%
- Travel essay 3: 15%
- Reading assigned material, attendance, and participation in group writing workshops and class discussion: 15%
- Final blog and newspaper project: 25%
- TOTAL: 100%

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100% Excellent (4 quality points per credit hour)
B	80-89% Good (3 quality points per credit hour)
C	70-79% Satisfactory (2 quality points per credit hour)
D	60-69% Passing (1 quality point per credit hour)
F	0-59% Failure (0 quality points per credit hour)

See <http://registrar.gatech.edu/info/grading-system> for more information about the grading system at Georgia Tech.

Description of Graded Components

Students will keep a travel journal and will write regularly. These writings will serve as the basis for class discussion, workshops, and travel essays. The journals will be checked and evaluated 3 times over the semester. They will be turned in along with the periodic essays that will be due. Recommended journal: MOLESKINE or another cheaper journal with hard cover. Travel journals can be purchased at bookstores, “librairies” and stationary stores “papeteries.” You can also just use a regular notebook, but the travel journal is a place of portable free expression - take it everywhere and tape, glue, attach, or draw in it as you would like.

Students will write 3 travel writing essays over the course of the semester that reflect the themes and forms studied. The journal serves as kind of a rough draft. They will turn this essay into the instructor and to the group. Students and instructor prepare for the group writing workshop the following class. During these workshops, students will critique writing and give feedback to others. Reading assigned material and rigorous participation in the workshops is expected.

We will also participate in a pilot project for a GTE newspaper that comes out once a month and features student travel experiences and other campus news.

The final project will culminate in a multimedia class travel blog that we will work on throughout the semester. Students will polish their travel essays to get them ready for publishing on the blog, which means many revisions are possible on one draft. Students may revise as many times as they like after receiving a travel essay grade until they obtain the desired grade.

As a class, we will study other travel blogs and come up for the best format for ours. Students will choose the final version two of their travel essays and upload it to the blog, adding photos, videos clips, a list of recommended visits, and other media. Possibilities for video and photos essays are possible. They will also be asked to comment on other class blogposts. The final class will be a presentation of the final blog entry and a brief explanation of the revision process the student undertook to get it to a publishable state.

Participation and Classroom Conduct

Good participation entails not only speaking and sharing your thoughts on a regular basis, but also being considerate and respecting the views of others. To earn high points in the participation part of the final grade, students will have demonstrated their awareness of the different functions of classroom comments by:

1. varying their discussion strategies,
2. considering what they say before they say it,
3. taking intellectual risks, and
4. always respecting the feelings of peers by not interrupting classmates while speaking and acknowledging interesting ideas.

Rubrics and Detailed Assignment Descriptions

For each assignment, you will receive a detailed assignment description well in advance of the deadline, which will include the grading rubric. I aim to return your assignments graded within one week of the due date. Delays may be longer with long travel weekends.

Course Materials

Course Texts and Materials

You do not have to purchase books for this class. All readings will come from the course reader posted on the Canvas site or from links to the internet.

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

Course Canvas Site, Class Blog

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations. This includes using unacknowledged AI to complete any portion of your work. Your work is your own.

ChatGPT/AI Policy

This course is about growing in your ability to write, communicate, and think critically. Generative AI agents such as ChatGPT, DALL-E 2, and others present great opportunities for learning and for

communicating. However, AI cannot learn or communicate for you, and so cannot meet the course requirements for you.

In this course, using generative AI tools in the work of the course (including assignments, discussions, ungraded work, etc.) is NOT allowed for writing travel journals. It is allowed for research for the travel essays, but all research must be documented. We will dedicate one class day to ChatGPT training in which you will be instructed on ways to use it correctly for this class.

As with any technology, generative AI tools need to be used critically and according to academic and professional expectations. Thus, when using generative AI tools in the work of this course for the assignments in which it is permitted, you are expected to adhere to these principles:

- **Responsibility:** You are responsible for the work you submit. In instances in which your instructor allows generative AI tool use, this means that any work you submit should be your own, with any AI assistance appropriately disclosed (see “Transparency” below) and any AI-generated content appropriately cited (see “Documentation” below). This also means you must ensure that any factual statements produced by a generative AI tool are true and that any references or citations produced by the AI tool are correct.
- **Transparency:** Any generative AI tools you use in the work of the course should be clearly acknowledged as indicated by the instructor. This work includes not only when you use content directly produced by a generative AI tool but also when you use a generative AI tool in the process of composition (for example, for brainstorming, outlining, or translation purposes).
- **Documentation:** You should cite any content generated by an AI tool as you would when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing ideas, text, images, or other content made by other people.

Using generative AI tools in the course without adhering to these principles will be considered an infraction of the Georgia Tech Honor Code subject to investigation by the Office of Student Integrity.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Collaboration & Group Work

Aside from group projects, all work must be your own. Work created by AI is not considered your work. If any portion of a group project is suspected of being completed by someone or something other than your group, all group members will be investigated and reported. Your written work will be checked with plagiarism software. Suspected cases of plagiarism/AI use will result in reporting to the Office of Student Integrity.

Attendance Policy

You are required to attend all classes and excursions. You can miss a maximum of 2 days, no questions asked. Excursions are not considered as class days to miss unless you have administrative approval. If you miss an excursion on a Friday without administrative approval, it will count as your 2 course absences. Each unexcused absence after 2 will result in 1 point deducted from your final grade. You must have approval and justification from the GTE administration in writing for an absence to be excused and not counted toward your 2 absences. If you miss on a portfolio workshop day, you will still be expected to do the work in your peer group. Missing a day of class does not excuse you automatically from turning an assignment due that day.

Coming to class and leaving early for an unexcused reason will result in an absence. This includes, among other things, leaving early to make a train or plane for independent travel. Coming more than 15 minutes to class for an unexcused reason will result in an absence. Leaving early with an unexcused reason will also result in an absence for that day.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

All extensions must be pre-approved before the due date by the instructor and, if deemed necessary by the instructor, justified by the Gatech administration. Missing class does not automatically grant you an extension on an assignment due date. If you miss on a portfolio workshop day, you will still be expected to do the work in your peer group.

Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom and on Guided Visits

Use of portable technology (cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) during class time is not permitted except for class-specific activities, which must be approved by the instructor. However, please remember that your success in this class will hinge in part on your attention to in-class discussion and content: please refrain from using your device during class except at designated times, and do your best to focus on the task at hand. Otherwise, please leave your laptop in your bag, turn off your cell phone, and resist the urge to text your mom.

During guided visits, cell phone use for texting, surfing the internet, or calling is not permitted. You may take notes and photos, but please refrain from posting them to social media accounts until after the visit is over.

Additional Course Policies

Eating: Gum chewing, eating, and drinking anything besides water is prohibited in the classrooms at GTE.

Hats: wearing baseball caps or other hats are not permitted during class in the classroom or on guided visits. Hats are permitted outside during guided visits for protection from sun, rain, snow, or cold.

Contacting the instructor by email: Outside of class excursions, the instructor will respond to all emails within the business workday (9am-6pm). If you send an email after 6pm or over the weekend, do not expect a response until the following business day. Please follow the instructions given to you by the GTE administration for contacting me by phone during travel times.

Campus Resources, Physical and Mental Health Resources for Students

GTE staff and faculty are here to help guide you to the right outlet for your mental health concerns. Remember, mental health is health! The sooner you treat the issue, the sooner you will feel better. Don't hesitate to reach out.

Please refer to guide given by GTE. These will also be posted to Canvas. When in doubt, contact Paul Voss: paul.voss@georgiatech-metz.fr

Information Related to Covid-19

Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the Institute guidelines, information, and updates related to Covid-19. Please consult your emails from GTE staff and faculty regarding changes and updates.

Recordings of Class Sessions and Required Permissions

Classes may not be recorded by students without the express consent of the instructor unless it is pursuant to an accommodation granted by the Office of Disability services. Class recordings, lectures, presentations,

and other materials posted on Canvas are for the sole purpose of educating the students currently enrolled in the course.

Diversity and Inclusion

GTE and the LMC support the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in broader society.

Teaching philosophy

The belief that learning must be natural, collective, and discussion-based is at the heart of my teaching philosophy. I do not consider myself the autocrat of this experience, but as a fellow traveler who acts as a facilitator and leader rather than a master. My goal is for students to develop, through an inquiry of creative texts, images, and technologies, the capacity for individual expression through a collaborative process. As such, they acquire a greater understanding of both diversity and universality among their peers, in their own communities, and in the world. As a teacher, there is no greater joy for me than to see students become confident individuals in class and in their production of creative materials.

Course Schedule

**This class will be held two times a week. This class will include excursions that will take place outside of class time. These excursions will be held at times that we can agree upon according to various schedules. Class excursions that take longer than the class time will be compensated by canceling classes during the regularly scheduled time. The schedule given at the beginning of the semester will be modified throughout the semester if we have interesting class opportunities arise. All modified dates will be announced well ahead of time so you can plan accordingly.*

***The accompanying travel details with specific departure and return times will be provided on a separate document before each trip.*

**** The day you see a required assignment or reading/viewing is the date that it is due for that class. Unless specified, all readings come from the course reader on the Canvas site. Sometimes, I will only assign parts of the listed readings if we are short on time. I will let you know at least at the class beforehand what pages I've selected.*

***** The journal entries on the updated schedule given to you on the first day of class. will provide the themes. However, you will receive a detailed assignment from me that will tell you more about how to craft each entry. Do not write journals ahead of outings.*