

# Berlin

## Mobility and Negotiations of Identity

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University of Washington  
Honors Program Study Abroad

2-credit Spring prep seminar at UW  
13-credit Summer B Term program in Berlin

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Like the U.S., U.K., in the summer of 2010, a heated discussion about migration policies and failed so-called integration efforts erupted over the publication of a politician's book that called for restrictive immigration policies and the reduction of welfare benefits. Thilo Sarrzin's *Germany Does Away With Itself* specifically targeted immigrants from Islamic countries, stating their unwillingness to integrate into German society. His negative campaign included an argument based on biology and genetic factors that preclude certain groups from integrating (troubling for its formal similarity to the discourse of Nazi eugenics). Despite the rejection of the book's racist premise, the book opened up a far-reaching debate about immigration, racism, historical anti-semitism and contemporary Islamophobia in Germany with President Christain Wulff leading the charge against Sarrzin's anti-immigrant rhetoric.

This program will explore immigration policy in Germany and across the EU integrating social science and humanities research and methods. What are the demographic shifts in immigration over the past 20 years, and specifically since the opening of Germany's borders after the formation of the EU? How have post-EU German national identities shifted and reformed as reflection and reaction to immigration patterns, particularly those from the non-West? Which cultural practices, expressions, spaces have become "battlegrounds" for assertions of both German identities and immigrant counter-identities? Why have gender and sexual practices become so central to the politics and regulation of immigration? Finally what might we learn for situating and understanding the U.S. immigration debate, especially in regards to immigrants of color and current anti-Middle-eastern Islamophobia, by studying the social and cultural politics of immigration in today's Berlin?

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