

**HC497: Castles! An Interdisciplinary Study  
Munich, Salzburg, and London**

**Instructor: Dr. Karen Roggenkamp**

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or via trip GroupMe chat during travels**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

For more than a thousand years, castles have dotted the European landscape and continue to attract millions of visitors yearly. This Honors College course will spotlight notable castles in England and Germany to explore them from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Along the way, we will return to some key questions, such as, What roles did castles play during various historical moments? How might castle architecture give us insight into such issues as public health, economics, sociology and psychology? How did castles shape specific narratives about art, literature, music . . . and even love itself? What can castles teach us about business and marketing challenges today as modern Europeans strive to preserve buildings that are inordinately expensive? How did castles serve an ideological function in the past, and how do they continue to do so in our own time? Through an investigation of 8 castles (and palaces), students will construct a comparative survey of these landmarks that highlights the way each structure tells its own story, within different contexts.

**TEXTBOOK:**

We will not have a traditional textbook for this class. Rather, the castles we visit will themselves be the “texts” that we “read” as we develop a greater understanding of the role such structures have played—and continue to play—in the human experience across time.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:**

The major outcomes of this class are experiential in nature, but verbal participation is still required. For each castle (or palace) we visit, we will also be having a discussion (usually beforehand) in which we think critically about the site, learn a bit about its history from group leaders, and converse about the connections and convergences we see emerging between the various places we visit. Be prepared to talk about what you are observing and learning, and be equally prepared to ask lots of questions.

I also urge you, however, to participate literally in the experience of being abroad. We will be visiting some of the most famous locations in the Western World, yet they are only a brief snapshot of the richness that European culture offers. Push yourself to explore and to try new foods and experiences. Be prepared to question what you know,

to push yourself out of your comfort zone, and to discover things about yourself. All of that is an essential part of the study abroad experience!

### **GRADED WORK:**

The letter grade for this course will be determined in the following manner:

Class participation/discussion:	20%
Pre-trip written assignment:	15%
Group leaders assignment:	15%
Travel journal:	20%
Final project:	30%

Pre-trip written assignment: Before we embark on our study of castles, spend some time reflecting on castles. What are some of the things that pop into your mind when you hear the word “castle”? In what ways do you see the influence of castles in American culture? Why do you think people continue to be fascinated by castles? How might there be a connection between a study abroad trip involving castles and your own career goals? (That may seem like a stretch, but give it some thought!) How do you predict or hope this castle-focused study abroad trip might enrich your Honors experience, and maybe even help prepare you for the next steps in life? These are just a few questions to get you thinking for this short written assignment. Aim for 3-4 double-spaced pages, which you should complete before we depart. Due in the D2L Pre-trip Assignment Dropbox for this course, no later than 11:59 p.m., May 31st.

Group leaders assignment: We will be dividing the class into teams of two or three people, and each team will be given a castle (or palace) to tell us about. The idea here is that you will prepare to talk for around 10 or 15 minutes when we gather in the morning about the location we will be visiting that day. You can think about this as something of an overview to the castle and its history/uses, but as we start seeing more castles, you can also draw some comparisons between locations. This will obviously take a bit of group prep **before** the trip so that you can coordinate what you will talk about and who will do what. If you would like to have anything like handouts available to the rest of the class, I can make copies and bring them.

Travel journals: An important way to process information and to create an artifact for your future enjoyment is to keep a travel journal. We will provide you with a conveniently-sized travel journal, and one of your graded items will be to write in that journal throughout our journey. You can write as many times as you wish, but the **minimum** is seven entries. By “entry,” I don’t mean 2 or 3 sentences. Think longer, richer, deeper than that. I will ask for these as soon as we get back to the US for

assessment purposes, so have them ready to hand in to me at the Dallas airport (you will get them back, don't worry). And I may do a bit of spot checking along the way, just in case anyone is tempted to write the whole thing on the flight home. ;-) That would defeat the purpose, obviously.

Final project: In my mind, the best final projects are the ones that bring loads of flexibility and that allow students to develop things that are of particular interest or relevance to them. As such, your final project is going to be up to you to design. Maybe you are a business major and want to create a business plan in order to make an imaginary castle you inherit turn a profit. Maybe you are getting your degree in education and would like to design a lesson unit on castles, complete with learning outcomes and good old TEKS requirements. Maybe you are a composer and would like to write some music, accompanied by some critical context or a process journal. Maybe you would like to take notes from your travel journal and turn them into a more fully fleshed out scrapbook or piece of art. Maybe you are a history or political science major and really want to dig further into a castle's strategic role within a certain time period. Maybe you would like to develop some sort of digital project, or maybe you want to do some creative writing. All of these are great options, and I'm open to your ideas! I just ask two things: 1. Do not use AI, unless you are doing so intentionally for something like creating visual images, and unless you clear it with me first, and 2. Talk to me beforehand about what, specifically, you wish to do so that we are on the same page about what all you will include in your project (I don't want you to take on more than you might be able to handle, nor do I want you to do a project that is too skimpy). You will have until near the end of SUMMER II to complete your project; due in D2L Final Project dropbox by August 1st, 11:59 pm.

### **ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:**

#### **COVID-19 Information:**

Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments.

#### **ADA Statement:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

## **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835; Fax (903) 468-8148

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Statement on Nondiscrimination:**

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Class Conduct:**

“All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” (See Student’s Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct). Further, students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### **The Counseling Center**

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center’s crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

### **D2L Information:**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903-468-6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc. If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Attendance:**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **CLASS SCHEDULE:**

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| June 3 | Overnight flight, DFW to Munich                                    |
| June 4 | Arrive in Munich; Munich Old Town hour                             |
| June 5 | Residenz, Munich   |
| June 6 | Imperial Castle (Kaiserburg or <b>Nürnberg</b> er Burg), Nuremberg |

June 7	Schloss Neuschwanstein, Schwangau
June 8	Dachau Concentration Camp
June 9	Field experience day (please do not travel alone)
June 10	Train from Munich to Salzburg, Austria
June 11	Salzburg Fortress (Festung Hohensalzburg)
June 12	Hellbrunn Palace
June 13	Field experience day
June 14	Train from Salzburg to Munich, then flight to London
June 15	Windsor Castle
June 16	Field experience day
June 17	Hever Castle
June 18	Tower of London
June 19	Field experience day
June 20	Fly London to DFW

