

The Global Media Festival Course Modules Template

Title of the Course Module:

Neukölln Unlimited

A Case Study of Migration

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Issues: (for example: environmental conservation, pollution; gender equality; migration; economic development; clean energy; water resources; etc.) We encourage you to link this issues with the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

Migration; integration; dance; break-dance; documentary genre; contemporary Germany; youth culture; Berlin; hip-hop music & dance; immigrant youth culture; Lebanese German;

Time commitment:

Four thematic units of a total of 5 class days, each 75 minutes (possible to only teach some of the suggested units / parts of the proposed modules), plus 100 minutes for film viewing

Overview: Provide a summary of your course module and present the main concepts, issues, examples (cases), and outcomes that motivate this curriculum activity.

The 2010 German documentary feature *Neukölln Unlimited* tells the story of three siblings, Hassan (18), Lial (19), and Maradona Akkouch (14), who strive to obtain permanent residence status in Germany. Faced with the constant threat of deportation to Lebanon, the three teenagers, growing up in Berlin's Neukölln, a borough notorious for its large immigrant population, set out to use their Hiphop and breakdance skills to avoid this fate.

In this teaching module, *Neukölln Unlimited* serves as a case study to explore issues such as migration, integration, and growing up as a teenager in contemporary Germany, which, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), is the most popular country for immigrants after the USA.

Brief Overview of Units:

Unit 1: Overview of history of migration in Germany, including social and legal frameworks in preparation for film viewing

Unit 2: Discussion of film

Unit 3: Introduction & analysis of documentary genre

Unit 4 & 5: Transnational Approach / Context of the Topic / Social Sustainability

Media content: Describe the media content that will be used to develop this course module and provide a brief synopsis of it.

Excerpt from Georgia Tech library description:

Neukölln Unlimited

"The siblings Hassan (18), Lial (19) and Maradona (14) are talented musicians and breakdancers growing up in Berlin's notorious Neukölln district. HipHop and streetdance are their language and their passion. Their family is from Lebanon and lives in constant danger of being deported from Germany. To prevent this from happening, and to secure a residency permit for the whole family, Hassan and Lial have a plan: to use their artistic talents to provide the necessary financial support for their family"

DD867.5.L43 N48 2010

https://gatech-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=01GALI_GIT_ALMA21305986450002947&context=L&vid=01GALI_GIT&search_scope=default_scope&tab=default_tab&lang=en_US

Reading sources: Provide a list of reading sources that will help introduce the subject and issues.

1. DOMID Website (Documentation Centre and Museum of Migration in Germany): <https://www.domid.org/en/migration-history-germany>. Provides a concise history of migration to Germany.
2. Website of the German Ministry for Migration and Refugees (BaMF): <http://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite-node.html>. Provides an overview of legal and legislative issues around migration.
3. Website of the Goethe Institute: <http://www.goethe.de/lhr/prj/daz/mag/mig/deindex.htm>. Provides examples of immigrant stories.
4. Website of the Goethe Institute: <http://www.goethe.de/lhr/prj/daz/pfv/enindex.htm>. Provides an overview on immigrant projects.
5. Textbook for American university/college classes on German migration history & debates: Göktürk, Deniz, David Gramling, and Anton Kaes. *Germany in Transit. Nation and Migration, 1955-2005*. U of California P, 2007. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520248946/germany-in-transit>
6. Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. Third Edition. Indiana UP, 2017. The Library at Georgia Tech has currently only the second edition available online.
7. Discussion about the film *Neukölln Unlimited* (Germany, 2010) with film director Agostino Imondi at Georgia Tech, <https://smartech.gatech.edu/xmlui/handle/1853/58388?show=full>
8. Summary & Film Poster (further resources in German): https://www.filmportal.de/en/movie/neukolln-unlimited_7af51a7edcee2ca4e040007f010010c0

9. BOPPPS Model for Lesson Planning
http://www.queensu.ca/teachingandlearning/modules/active/18_boppps_model_for_lesson_planning.html
10. Social Sustainability <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/our-work/social>
11. Sustainable Integration of Refugees https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/wp-content/uploads/sites/23/2018/05/Robila_EGM_2018.pdf ,
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325059925_Sustainable_Alternatives_for_Refugee_Social_Integration_in_European_Communities_TimeBanking_and_Large-Scale_Individualized_Education

Instructions: The four units are developed around one class prior to viewing (Unit I) and three classes post viewing (II-IV)

Unit I: Prior to Viewing. Module on History of Immigration into Germany, Social and legal Contexts.

1. Intro to segment: Ideas and Conceptions on Migration

--> *TASK: Please brainstorm and discuss the following questions in your group! Report on your findings from #1 to the class.*

- a. Does your family have any history of migration?
- b. Why do people leave their native country? What past migration movements are you familiar with?
- c. Immigration to Germany: What time periods come to mind, why did people come to Germany?
- d. What does the term “integration” mean in the context of immigration?

2. Define Outcomes: By the end of this module, you will:

- a. have a brief historical overview of the main migration movements into Germany at different time periods of the 20th and 21st century;
- b. Be familiar with the main reasons why people from all over the world came to Germany at different times;
- c. Have an overview on the legal aspects of immigration of the Federal Republic and the different legal statuses of immigrants
- d. Have become acquainted with political debates around immigration into Germany
- e. Have an overview on the main immigrant communities in contemporary Germany

3. Participatory Learning:

In groups, prepare 5-min presentations that are then shared with the group:

a. Group 1: Website DOMiD:

<https://www.domid.org/en/migration-history-germany> --> TASK: *Research the history of immigration to Germany from the 17th century up to the 2000s. What were the main periods of immigration and why? What nationalities?*

b. Group 2: Website des BAMF:

<http://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite-node.html> --> TASK: *Research the legal situation for immigrants.*

c. Group 3: Testimonials & Examples:

<http://www.goethe.de/lhr/prj/daz/mag/mig/deindex.htm> --> TASK: *Research & Present an immigrant story vis-a-vis the issue of "integration." Focus on the perceived challenges and successes.*

d. Group 4: Website Goethe Institut on Refugee Projects:

<http://www.goethe.de/lhr/prj/daz/pfv/enindex.htm> TASK: *How are refugees prepared for living in Germany? Introduce two examples of the Goethe Zentrum's initiatives.*

4. Present Findings:

a. Group Presentations on #3

5. Homework:

a. Essay. *In your view, what were the major steps (successes and challenges) Germany was facing during its transition to becoming an immigration country from the 1950s until today? What successes and challenges did the immigrants face? Comment on both sociopolitical and legal aspects.*

Unit II. Discussion & Analysis of Film

1. Bridge-in/Introduction to class:

- Do you think the film poster is a good representation/teaser for the documentary? (https://www.filmportal.de/en/movie/neukolln-unlimited_7af51a7edcee2ca4e040007f010010c0)
- Come up with three questions for the filmmaker/about the movie after viewing the film.

2. Participatory Activity 1:

- a. *With your partner, please write a short summary (5-10 sentences) of the film. Come up with a list of the three most important themes of the documentary.*

3. Participatory Activity 2:

- a. *In your groups, please portray one of the three, Hassan, Lial, or Maradona. How does the film categorize these three, what do we learn about them and their desires and challenges/problems?*

4. Participatory Activity 3:

- a. *Students receive a still frame from the film that portrays one of the protagonists in a prominent scene from the film. They collaborate on a monologue that represents the protagonist's conflicts and challenges in the film.*

5. Homework:

- a. Film an interview with a family member or a friend and ask them the following two questions:
- i. What do you know about the issue of immigration in present-day USA?
 - ii. What is your own or your family's experience with migration?

Unit III. Module on Film Analysis & the Significance of the Documentary Genre

Lesson plan structured according to BOPPPS Model for Lesson Planning

http://www.queensu.ca/teachingandlearning/modules/active/18_boppps_model_for_lesson_planning.html

1. Bridge-In

Please discuss with your partner the following two questions in the next 3 minutes:

- a. What is your favorite movie?
- b. What genre does it belong to?

[Plenum: Have 2-3 students summarize their partner's answer to class]

2. Outcomes

By participating in class and completing your homework assignment, you will be able to

- 1) *define the genre of documentary film,*
- 2) *explain why genres matter for our understanding of films, and*
- 3) *analyze Neukölln Unlimited within the context of documentary filmmaking and its genre-specific characteristics and conventions.*

In order to accomplish these goals, we will

- 1) *define the genre of documentary film via group work*
- 2) *apply our knowledge about the documentary genre to our analysis of Neukölln Unlimited*
- 3) *and read up on documentary films as homework.*

3. Pre-Assessment

Question for Plenum (3-5 minutes)

1. What genre does *Neukölln Unlimited* belong to?
2. What do you know about the documentary genre?
3. In the context of migration and its history: Why might the filmmaker have chosen this particular genre? *(collect response on board)*

4. Participatory Learning

- A. *In your groups, please discuss the following three assumptions people held commonly about documentary films. Consult the relevant pages from Bill Nichols' Introduction to Documentary.² According to Nichols, how should we modify these assumptions about documentary films? Why? Do you have any comments/concerns/questions about Nichols' modified definitions? Be prepared to present your findings to the rest of class in approximately 10 minutes.*
 - a. Group 1: "Documentaries are about reality; they are about something that actually happened." (page 5-6)
 - b. Group 2: "Documentaries are about real people." (page 6-7)
 - c. Group 3 & 4: "Documentaries tell stories about what happens in the real world." (7-10)
- B. *We will now watch a short clip from an interview the director of Neukölln Unlimited, Agostino Imondi, gave during his visit of the Global Media Festival at Georgia Tech in 2017. After viewing the clip, please take a close look at the following working definition of "documentary" that Nichols provided after modifying common assumptions of the documentary genre. In your groups,*

please discuss how Imondi's comments and Nichols' working definition relate to each other. Why should we care about the relationship that exists between a single documentary such as Neukölln Unlimited and the genre of documentary? How might our knowledge of the documentary genre influence the way we watch Neukölln Unlimited and understand it? How might this knowledge shape our understanding of migration and integration? Please present a short summary of your discussion and thoughts to the rest of the class in approximately 15 minutes.

a. Show clip, 6:17-7:33 minutes only

<https://smartech.gatech.edu/xmlui/handle/1853/58388?show=full>

b. "Modifying the three commonsense definitions we have just examined into one somewhat more precise definition yields something like this: Documentary film speaks about situations and events involving real people (social actors) who present themselves within a framework. This frame conveys a plausible perspective on the lives, situations, and events portrayed. The distinct point of view of the filmmaker shapes the film into a way of understanding the historical world directly rather than through a fictional allegory." (Nichols 10)

5. Post-Assessment

Please write a paragraph in response to Nichols' closing remarks to his question of how can we define documentary film. Please use Neukölln Unlimited as an example when responding and thinking through the questions that Nichols poses. For instance, one of the aspects you might want to address is the filmmaker's use of animation in the documentary.

"Documentaries stimulate epistophilia (a desire to know) in their audiences. At their best, they tell an engaging story, make a compelling case, or convey a fresh, poetic perspective that promises information and knowledge, insight and awareness. Documentaries propose to their audiences that the gratification of this desire to know will be their mission. He Who Knows (the voice of the film has traditionally been masculine) will share knowledge with those who wish to know. We gain a sense of knowledge, pleasure, and satisfaction as a result. This dynamic may pose questions as well as resolve them. We may ask, Who is this one who speaks as the one who knows? Who are we that we yearn to know things, and what kind of things do we want to know? What form of knowledge is the knowledge documentaries provide? To what use do we put the knowledge a film provides? What we know, and how we come to believe in what we know, are matters of social importance. Power and responsibility reside in knowing; the use we make of what we learn extends beyond our engagement with documentary films to our engagement with the historical world that such films represent." (Nichols 26-27)

6. Summary

Handout: Summary of Documentary Genre (which includes a brief overview of Nichol's 6 modes of documentaries: poetic, expository, participatory, observational, reflexive, performative, linear, discursive (see Nichols))

7. Homework

- A. *At home, please read the essay "Defining Documentary Film" by Henrik Juel (https://pov.imv.au.dk/Issue_22/section_1/artc1A.html). Please write your own definition of documentary film, along with five things to consider when watching documentaries, based on Juel's essay, your handout on documentary films, and our class today.*
- B. *Please write a short comment in response to the following quote from German film director Christian Petzold whose films generally feature elements from different film genres. Consider: How does Petzold's view of genre cinema adds to and challenges your own understanding of genre?*

"I have the feeling that I make films in the cemetery of genre cinema, from the remainders that are still there for the taking." (Christian Petzold, <https://www.cineaste.com/summer2008/the-cinema-of-identification-gets-on-my-nerves>)

Unit IV. Transnational Approach / Context of the Topic / Social Sustainability

First Class:

1. Presentation by instructor:

- a. What is the concept of a "nation"?
- b. Since when do we group people into nations?
- c. What does citizenship mean?
- d. Who is (not) granted citizenship?
- e. How selective are nations in who is granted citizenship?
- f. What is transnationalism?
- g. What role does transnationalism play in approaching a movie, novel, piece of art?

2. Group Work – Discuss the following:

- a. Please compare the U.S. and Germany's laws regarding citizenship.
- b. What does transnationalism mean?
- c. Why is the term useful to discuss current events and topics in the movie?

- d. How would you describe the role of transnational documentary movies? Provide some other examples and compare this movie to other movies; describe the impression it left on you.

3. Homework/Podcast:

- a. Please develop a narrative that would summarize the connection and the socio-political context of the movie *Neukölln* to discuss national border issues. Narrate the 2-minute podcast and post it in Voice Thread on Canvas. Please open it for comments. Each student has to listen to two podcast and write 5 sentences as a comment on the podcast. What is covered? How did the podcast present the topics of the movie. How did it problematize the movie's message?

Second Class:

1. Brief discussion with the whole class of podcasts, comments, impression of the movie.

2. Presentation by instructor:

- a. What is social sustainability?
- b. Provides examples of social sustainability.
- c. Compares different aspects of social vs. economic and environmental sustainability.

3. Assignment for short in-class debate/discussion. Work in groups and write down brief responses to the following questions:

- a. Frame the movie in terms of social sustainability.
- b. What does social sustainability mean?
- c. In what way do equity, voice, equality, access to education, integration into society vs. assimilation play a role in the plot and story of *Neukölln*?
- d. What obstacles do the teenagers in the movie have to overcome?
- e. How can a society (Germany in this case) improve its approach to include non-citizens into its community?
- f. What role does art play in bridging differences? Please provide examples of music, song, dance, visual art, T-shirt slogans etc. in your debate.

4. Homework:

Please write a letter of 10 sentences to a German politician (Berlin's mayor, German Chancellor, or someone else). Make sure you follow the German guidelines of writing a letter: address, date, closing etc. Try to convince the politician in the letter to support the family's attempt to stay in Germany permanently and list all the accomplishments

and contribution of the family to German society. Explain in the letter how the movie moved you to write the letter.