9 November 1989 marks the beginning of the end of 40 years of Germany’s division. Over the following 30 years, German film has thematized the bumps along the path to reunification, negotiated cultural clashes, and celebrated the diversity and heterogeneity of today’s Germany. This course will focus on this new German film industry’s portrayal not only the recent past, but also of the relationship between the history of 20th century Germany and the present. Topics we will address include: representations of both the Nazi era and the East German past in the context of a united Germany; the transition from two national cinemas to a single German film industry; cinema’s attempts to engage with the evolution of what it means to be “German” today; and the emergence of the innovative and critical “Berlin School” of cinema. Films will include: Good Bye, Lenin! (2003), Downfall (2004), The Lives of Others (2006), Barbara (2012), Phoenix (2014) and In the Fade (2017).

All films in German with English subtitles; no knowledge of German necessary. May count towards the General Education requirement in the Humanities, the Minor in Film Studies, and the Minor in German Studies.