

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**  
www.mlcs.ualberta.ca

**2015-2016 GERM 343 A2: Postwar Cultures**  
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Dr. Carrie Smith-Prei

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Time: T R 2:00-3:20

Place: T 1 90

Office Hours: T 10-12,  
or by appointment

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**Course Prerequisite:** Recommended that you have taken at least one senior-level literary, film, or cultural analysis course OR consent of department

**Course-based Ethics Approval** in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

- Yes       No, not needed, no such projects approved.

**Community Service Learning** component

- Required     Optional     None

**Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available**

- Exam registry – Students' Union  
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

**Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)**

- Yes       No

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course focuses on historical, social, and cultural changes taking place in German-speaking countries from 1945 to the present. The course will have three primary focal points: the impact of WWII and the holocaust, the GDR and unification, and migration and race. Throughout, we will examine how these issues of the past continue to resonate in the present. During the semester, students will learn about and discuss the historical facts and cultural phenomena and develop the tools to analyze how these developments are configured and reflected in literature, film, architecture, and other art forms. We will also explore how cultural artifacts and representations in return shape and influence society. We will view films, read short stories, discuss newspaper articles, and we will

tackle a longer literary text that narrates experiences in East Germany and after the “Wende” in order to develop students’ ability for sustained analysis through a variety of media. Students will learn to critically engage with concepts such as culture, collective identity, and cultural memory both in the classroom through discussions of readings, films, images, and other documents as well as in their own intellectual engagement in essays, debates, and group work. The goal of the course is to increase and deepen the students’ understanding of those historical and cultural aspects that define contemporary Germany.

**Texts:**

*Course material* will be posted on eClass and/or distributed in class.

**Book** (available at U of A Bookstore): Jana Hensel: *Zonenkinder*, rowohlt: Reinbek, 5. Auflage 2005

**Films** (available at Rutherford Library or ARC – Arts)

*Deutschland: Schicksalstunden. Zwölf legendäre Doku-Dramen erzählen Geschichte. Von der Wannenseekonferenz bis zur Wiedervereinigung.* Die Zeit-Dokumentation.

*Der Untergang* von Oliver Hirschbiegel (2004)

*Die Mörder sind unter uns* von Wolfgang Staudte (1946)

*Der geteilte Himmel* von Konrad Wolf (1964)

*Das Leben der Anderen* von Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck (2006)

*Good bye Lenin* von Wolfgang Becker (2003)

*Ali Angst essen Seele auf* von Rainer Werner Fassbinder (1974)

*Türkisch für Anfänger* von Bora Dagtekin (2012)

**Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):**

10% attendance and participation

10% film introduction: ongoing

10% roundtable statement and debate: **Sept. 29, Oct. 27, Nov. 26**

10% creative project: **Nov. 17**

30% short essays (may be inspired by roundtable statement or film introduction, 15% each):

**Oct. 13, Dec. 1**

15% test I: **Oct. 20**

15% test II: **Dec. 3**

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

***Roundtable Statement and Debate***

Each student is expected to participate in a roundtable discussion on a specific controversy related to our topic by preparing a 5-7 minute statement and by actively engaging in the debate following the short presentations. The statement should give an introduction to and overview of the topic including important facts and dates; it should then focus on a specific aspect and introduce an assumption or opinion, and finally articulate relating questions that will be discussed during the debate.

### ***Film Introduction***

Throughout the course we will be watching films that relate to our topics. Students will be expected to prepare a very brief (no more than 10 minutes) introduction to the film to be discussed, including relevant facts (director, year) and three questions for discussion (groups of 2-3).

### ***Short Essays***

Two short essays are due during the term. The essays should reflect and elaborate on the objectives and materials learned and used in class. The essays are expected to display a structured argument with a compelling thesis and insightful conclusion. You are welcome to use secondary sources, articles and books. To choose a topic for each unit, please see the list distributed in class. If you would like to elaborate on a topic of your own choosing, please contact the instructor in advance. Each essay should be 2-3 pages in length.

### ***Creative Project***

In this course students will be asked to complete a group project (2-3 students per group) on “Wendekultur.” You will be expected to do most of the preparation outside of the classroom, however, you will also receive some time during class to work on these projects. You should build your project around one or more “found objects,” something – an image, a word, a person, a building, a product, a text, a city, or an event, for example – that represents the difficulties, the changes, or the opportunities that the “Wende” brought with it and which continues to play a role in the memory of the “Wende” today. The project can either be presented in form of a poster, image, drawing, collage, a cartoon, or in form of one or several objects. All group projects will be presented and discussed on Monday, November 16.

### ***Test I and II***

There will be two tests, one in the middle of the term and one towards the end of term. Each test will consist of questions relating to the theories, texts, and films studied in class, as well as to the group work and discussions. Each test will be 50 minutes long.

### **Required Notes:**

“Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University calendar.”

### ***Academic Integrity:***

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at

<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx> ) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or

participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

***Learning and Working Environment:***

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment safe and free of discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels this policy has been or is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that directs discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the student ombudservice (<http://www.ombudservice.ualberta.ca/>).

Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL at

<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=110> .

***Academic Honesty:***

**All students** should consult the information provided by the [Office of Judicial Affairs](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

**Students involved in language courses and translation courses** should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.”

**Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

***Recording of Lectures:***

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

***Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:***

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and

procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections 23.3(1) and 23.5.6 of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

**In this course**, attendance, preparation, and regular participation go hand in hand; students will not only be expected to attend each session, but they are expected to come prepared for the day’s lesson and participate in that day’s lesson. As the course will be run in seminar-style, the success of the course is dependent on informed and lively discussions driven by student engagement. It is therefore vital that each student complete the required readings, film screenings, or written exercises assigned for the scheduled class. Attendance, preparation, and regular participation will count for 10% of the overall grade for the course.

***Policy for Late Assignments:***

Students who consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, late assignments with no prior arrangement will receive a 5%-per-class-day penalty for each subsequent class-day of lateness.

***Student Accessibility Services:***

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with Specialized Support & Disability Services, contact their office immediately (2-800 SUB; Email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); Email; phone 780-492-3381; WEB [www.ssd.s.ualberta.ca](http://www.ssd.s.ualberta.ca) ).

***Grading:***

Marks for assignments, tests, and exams are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below (“**MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale**”). The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course.

**“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”**

Letter	%	Pts	Descriptor
A+	95-100%	4.0	<b>Outstanding:</b> Superior performance showing understanding and knowledge of the subject matter far exceeding expectations.
A	90-94%	4.0	<b>Excellent:</b> Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	86-89%	3.7	<b>Very good:</b> Clearly above average performance with complete knowledge of subject matter.
B+	82-85%	3.3	<b>Very good</b>

B	75-81%	3.0	<b>Good:</b> average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
B-	70-74%	2.7	<b>Good</b>
C+	66-69%	2.3	<b>Satisfactory:</b> Basic understanding of the subject matter
C	61-65%	2.0	<b>Satisfactory</b>
C-	58-60%	1.7	<b>Satisfactory</b>
D+	55-57%	1.3	<b>Minimal Pass:</b> Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
D	50-54%	1.0	<b>Minimal Pass:</b> Marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.
F	0-49%	0.0	<b>Fail:</b> Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.