**HIST 4357-001/GERM 4322-002: The Communist Dictatorship in Germany, 1949-1989**

**Instructor:** Thomas Adam

**Office Number:** 330 Hammond Hall

**Email Address:** adam@uta.edu

**Faculty Profile:** <https://www.uta.edu/mentis/public/#profile/profile/view/id/1206/category/1>

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Time and Place of Class Meetings:** Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:00am -12:20pm; Room: TH 218

**Description of Course Content:** This seminar focuses on the history of East Germany (German Democratic Republic) from its founding in 1949 to its demise in 1989/90. Students will be introduced to the political, social, economic, and cultural history of Communist East Germany. Topics will include the structure of the political system (parties, government, etc.), opposition, the economic development, popular culture and film in East Germany, and the everyday life experience of East Germans. The class will provide insights into the causes of the 1989 peaceful transformation and the process of regime change in East Germany.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** This seminar is designed to broaden the student’s understanding of German history and the many angles from which German history can be studied. By providing various readings with different interpretations of particular aspects of German history, students will become aware of the nature of historical research. This course, further, introduces students to the concepts of political, economic, cultural and social history using German history as a case study. The main goal of this class is to enable students to develop analytical skills by reading historical narratives and discussing the underlying theories and interpretations in seminars. The seminar style of this class will give the students an opportunity to engage in discussions and play an active role in the learning process.

**Required Text books and other course materials:**

• Mike Dennis, *The Stasi: Myth and Reality*, London: Pearson Longman 2003.

• Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR 1949-1989*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2000.

• Peter Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2012.

• Charles S. Meier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997.

• Edith Sheffer, *Burned Bridge: How East and West Germans Made the Iron Curtain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011.

• DVD: *Spur der Steine* (*Trace of Stones*) directed by Frank Beyer.

• DVD: *Goodby Lenin* directed by Wolfgang Becker.

• For German students only: DVD: *Das Versprechen* directed by Margarethe von Trotta.

**Course Requirements and Grading Policy:**

The final grade consists of four components: 1) class participation essays; 2) a hand-drawn map of East Germany; 3) one introduction to the readings assigned of a particular class; 4) four essays.

Class Participation 30 percent

Introduction of Class Topic 20 percent

Four Essays 40 points

Hand-drawn Map of East Germany 10 points

**(1) Class participation:** The grade for class participation is based on your physical presence in class (you can miss up to two classes without penalty) and your active AND informed participation in class discussion. Please keep in mind that this is NOT a lecture course but a **seminar** (meaning that this is a student-centered form of academic learning).

**(2) Map of East Germany:** This map is to show the political and administrative structure of the German Democratic Republic with all outside borders and all district borders. Please also include the names and capital cities of all districts. **Photocopying or scanning such a map from a collection of maps is not acceptable!**

**(3) Introduction of Class Topic:** Each student will chose one class topic and provide a 15 minute introduction at the beginning of the class. This introduction is supposed to provide a basis for the class discussion.

**(4) Four essays:** **(A) Essay about the *Children of Golzow*:** This essay of three to five pages should discuss the life experience of children who came of age in East Germany during the 1960s and 1970s. What were the freedoms and limitations of living in East Germany? **(B) Essay discussing the significance of the year 1952 versus 1961 for the course of East German history:** Sheffer in her book *Burned Bridge* argues that the events of 1952 might have been a greater turning point in East German history than the events of 1961. Clearly identify the events Sheffer refers to and the two arguments for the significance of either event. Decide which of the two events you consider more significant and make a convincing argument. **(C) Essay about the movie *Goodbye Lenin*:** This essay of three to five pages should discuss the image about Eats Germany created in the movie by the main protagonist. For whom does he create this image? And why does he do it? (D) **Essay discussing the terminological labeling of the East German state:** This five page essay is based upon the reading of chapter 1 from Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*. Pick one the labels offered in this chapter and make a convincing argument for applying this particular label to the East German system based upon the readings from this class.

**For German students only:** **(E) Essay about the movie *Das Versprechen*:** This five page essay (written in English) should provide a brief summary of the movie (not more than one to two pages). This summary should be followed by a discussion of the female protagonist’s life in West Berlin. Please discuss whether she has arrived in West German society and whether she feels free in West Germany?

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Student Support Services**:UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at [www.uta.edu/resources](http://www.uta.edu/resources).

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.

**Schedule of Seminars**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Week 1August 25 | **Introduction** |
| Week 2August 30 and September1 | **East Germany after World War II**● Movie (shown in class) *The Murderers are Among Us* and Introduction Lecture. |
| Week 3September 6 and 8**Map of East Germany is due on September 6** | **The Founding of the East German Dictatorship**● Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, chapter 1. |
| Week 4September 13 and 15 | **Challenge to Power – The June 17,1953 Uprising**● Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, chapter 2.● Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, chapter 7. |
| Week 5September 20 and 22**Essay 1952 versus 1961 is due September 20** | **The Living Wall**● Sheffer, *Burned Bridge*, chapters 1-7. |
| Week 6September 27 and 29**Essay about the movie *Das Versprechen* (German students only) is due on September 27** | **The Building of the Berlin Wall**● Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, chapter 3.● Sheffer, *Burned Bridge*, chapters 8-10. |
| Week 7October 4 and 6 | **The Integration of the East German Population**● Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, chapter 3.● Lutz Niethammer, “Zeroing in on Change: In Search of Popular Experience in the Industrial Province in the German Democratic Republic,” in: Alf Lüdtke (ed.), *The History of Everyday Life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1995, pp. 252-303.● Damar Langenhan and Sabine Roß, “The Socialist Glass Ceiling”, in: Konrad H. Jarausch (ed.), *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR*, New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books 1999, pp. 177-191. |
| Week 8October 11 and 13**Essay about the *Children of Golzow* is due on October 11** | **Growing Up in East Germany**● Movie: *The Children of Golzow*.● Movie: *Spur der Steine* (*Trace of Stones*). |
| Week 9October 18 and 20 | **The Niche Society**● Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, chapter 5.● Steven Pfaff, *Exit-Voice Dynamics and the Collapse of East Germany: The Crisis of Leninism and the Revolution of 1989*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006, pp. 61-80. |
| Week 10October 25 and 27 | **Population under Surveillance**● Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, chapter 2.● Dennis, *The Stasi*, chapters 2-7.● Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately, “Introduction to the Practices of Denunciation in Modern European History”, in: *The Journal of Modern History* 68 (December 1996), pp. 747-767. |
| Week 11November 1 and 3 | **Suppression of Dissent**● Fulbrook, Anatomy of a Dictatorship, chapter 8.● Dennis, The Stasi, chapters 10-11. |
| Week 12November 8 and 10 | **The Planned Economy**● Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, chapters 4-5.● Meier, *Dissolution*, chapter 2. |
| Week 13November 15 and 17 | **The November Revolution**● Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, chapter 6.● Pfaff, *Exit-Voice Dynamics and the Collapse of East Germany*, pp.165-189.● Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, chapter 9.● Meier, *Dissolution*, chapters 3-4. |
| Week 14 | **NO CLASS MEETING (THANKSGIVING)** |
| Week 15November 29 and December 1 **Essay about the movie *Goodbye Lenin* is due on November 29** | **The End of East Germany**● Meier, *Dissolution*, chapters 5-6.● Movie: *Goodbye Lenin*. |
| Week 16December 6**Essay about labeling East German system is due December 6** | **Defining the East German System**● Grieder, *The German Democratic Republic*, chapter 1.  |

**Color Codes:**

Black: Textbooks

Red: Electronic Course Reserves

Blue: e-book

Green: Online Journals (J-Store)