University of Victoria  
Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies  

**SLST 450: The Cold War on Film**

**Mondays 6:30–9:20p in HSD A240**  
Instructor: David Christopher / Office: Clearihue D245 / Contact: dchristo@uvic.ca  
Office Hours: Mondays 3:00p–5:00p & by appointment

In this course we are going to examine the enemy’s image in Soviet and Western films of the Cold War eras. We will start with the important “prequel” to the Cold War, the first two decades after the Bolshevik Revolution, and extend our discussion of cinematic representations all the way to the recent renewal of geopolitical rivalry between Russia and the West. Our aim in this course will be to study the Cold War as a cultural war, both in the sense of the conflict’s reflection in culture and culture’s active role as propaganda. By applying critical analysis, we will learn to identify cultural stereotypes and interrogate the either-or fallacies that fueled Cold-War animosities. In the process, we will also talk about many fascinating spy scandals and blockbuster movies which mutually played their own parts in the Cold War historical narrative.

There are no prerequisites, and no academic background in Russian Studies is assumed. This course may count towards a Minor in Film Studies. There are no books to buy for this course. All the readings will be available either as articles in electronic journals accessible through the UVic library or as digitized texts on electronic reserve at the library. All quizzes will be based on the screenings, lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions.

**EVALUATION SCHEME:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz I (4 February, multiple-choice):</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz II (10 March, multiple-choice):</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A short film report on a set topic (4-5 pages, due 3 March):</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz III (31 March, multiple-choice):</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To familiarize yourself with UVic’s grading guidelines, please consult the University Calendar. As per University policies regarding the assignment of a final grade, 0.5 or above is rounded up, while below 0.5 should be rounded down.

**Tentative Weekly Schedule:**

9 January: **Introduction to the course.**

16 January: **The Bolshevik Revolution and the “First” Cold War / Early Soviet Cinema and Its Image of the West.**  
Film: *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1924).  
Read: Nancy Yanoshak, “Mr. West Mimicking ‘Mr. West’: America in the Mirror of the Other,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 41, no. 6 (2008): read only 1051–52 & 1054–64 [electronic journal; access through UVic Library].

23 January: **The West Laughs back at the Soviets.**  
Film: *Ninotchka* (1939).  
30 January:  **The Allies Become Enemies: The Early Cold War and the Birth of Cold-War Cinema.**  
ing_on_the_Elb_neu.pdf;sequence=1].

6 February:  **QUIZ I.**  
**The Russians Are Coming! A Short History of Cold-War Cultural Paranoia.**  
Film: *Invasion USA* (1952).  

13 February:  NO CLASS (Reading Break)

20 February:  **A Recipe for a Spy Saga: James Bond.**  
Film: *From Russia with Love* (1963).  

27 February:  **A Russian James Bond: Where Are You?**  

6 March:  **One-upmanship in the Cinema of Brinkmanship.**  
**FILM REPORT DUE IN CLASS.**  

13 March:  **QUIZ II.**  
**The Triumphalism of the Winners in the Cold War or the Cinema of Nuclear Disarmament?**  
Read: Lawrence H. Suid, *Guts and Glory*, 570–79 [CourseSpaces].

20 March:  **When the Russians Finally Came.**  
Film: *Brother 2* (2000).  

27 March:  **Why We Cannot Let the Cold War Go.**  
Film: *Salt* (2010).  
No reading this week; good luck on the final quiz!

3 April:  **QUIZ III.**  
Conclusions.
**Course Policies in Detail**

Assignments submitted late will be subject to a late penalty: 10 percent for the first day and 5 percent for the subsequent days. Plagiarism will result in a “0” mark on an offending assignment with no chance to redo it. Make-up quizzes will only be given in exceptional cases of unavoidable absences supported by appropriate medical or other documentation. Please check the quiz dates before booking any trips. Class attendance will be evaluated solely based on the sign-up sheets, which will be circulated either at the start or at the end of the class. Medical documentation-excusing class absences should be shown to the instructor in the next class after the one(s) you missed and will not be accepted after the end of classes. Any questions about your quiz marks should be asked within a week after these marks have been posted; no such requests in relation to quizzes I and II, as well as the film report, will be accepted after the end of classes. Questions concerning your last quiz will only be accepted until the submission of final grades (this date will be announced in advance).

**Accessibility Statement:** Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodation, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD) as soon as possible. RCSD staff members are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

**Concessions and Documentation:** Students may ask for an academic concession, such as the rescheduling of a quiz or test or an extension for an assignment, contingent upon the provision of proper documentation detailing a personal or medical affliction or time conflict. Proper documentation means a physician’s note or a memo from Counseling Services, or a memo from a coach, employer, or faculty member. It must be dated before or close to the time of the missed work or classes.

**Withdrawals and Deferrals:** Students who miss substantial amounts of class and assignments without documentation will be asked to withdraw, or they will receive an ‘N’ at the end of the semester. Even if the reasons for failing to meet course requirements are valid, it is not academically sound to allow students missing significant amounts of work to continue in the course. Students are to familiarize themselves with the withdrawal dates in the current academic calendar.

**A Note on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** Actions such as plagiarism, multiple submissions, falsifying materials used in academic evaluations, cheating, or helping others to cheat violate University policies on academic integrity and are considered serious offences. You must inform yourself about the university regulations (see UVic Policy on Academic Integrity).

**Classroom Conduct:** Since the quality of the learning environment is paramount, every student has the right to learn, and your instructor has the duty to perform his or her teaching duties in a cooperative, distraction-free, and effective manner. Activities that could disrupt the learning environment for you and your instructor would include the non-academic use of electronic devices. Students are expected to turn off their cell phones, PDAs, and mp3 players during class.

**Add/Drop Deadlines:** It is the student’s responsibility to abide by ADD/DROP dates as published in the Calendar and the Undergraduate Registration Guide and Timetable. You will not be dropped automatically from a class that you do not attend.