

# 1989/2009 – 20 YEARS AFTER THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

FRESHMAN SEMINAR: UNIVERSITY 197-HIST2-01

HERTER HALL RM 112 – TUESDAYS 11:15 – 12:05 PM

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

**Dr. Jon Berndt Olsen**

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**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 2-3, Wednesdays 2-3 pm or by appointment

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## OVERVIEW:

This seminar takes a look back at the events that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Twenty years after the fall of the wall, issues of the revolution and Germany's unification in 1990 still have potent political and cultural relevance. In this course we will look at the events that led to this historic change within Germany's domestic and international context, never losing site of the fact that Germany remained the centerpiece of the Cold War, yet recognizing that it was the dissidents who took to the street who ultimately brought about an end to State Socialism in East Germany.

## GOALS:

From this class you should gain a better understanding of the East German revolution and how this event still has relevance in contemporary Germany. Equally important, however, this course aims to develop your ability to *think critically* – to read and think about complex historical issues beyond the simple facts of the case. Certainly the facts are important, but you will also learn to think like an historian, trying to understand not only the 'what' of history, but also the 'why'. You will then need to be able to express your views and interpretations in a clear and logical manner.

## EXPECTATIONS:

To succeed in this class you will need to keep up with the reading, participate actively in class discussions, and take part in our semester-long project. If at any time you are having difficulties with the material or the assignments, or just need to talk, please do not hesitate to come and see me.

**Attendance:** I expect you to be here. You will do yourself a great disservice by not attending class – you will miss material and interpretations from that day's presentation as well as the opportunity to ask questions and otherwise interact with your classmates – an important part of the learning process. There are occasionally good reasons to miss class (medical mishaps, religious holidays, family emergencies, athletic & musical contests); you do not need to keep me informed of the details. However, if you miss more than three weeks worth of classes, your final grade will drop one full letter. If you miss more than five weeks of classes, I strongly suggest you drop the course, because otherwise you will **fail automatically**. This is only reasonable: why should you earn college credit if you miss a substantial portion of the semester?

**Conduct in class:** You may drink any non-alcoholic beverage that suits your fancy. Please refrain from eating and from chewing tobacco. Also, **turn off cell phones** and other electronic messaging devices before class.

**Laptops** may be used for the sole purpose of taking notes in class. Any other use (such as instant messaging, emailing, surfing the web or like activities) will cause you to lose this privilege.

**Special needs:** The University of Massachusetts is firmly dedicated to making a college education available to all students with the appropriate academic preparation, regardless of physical or other conditions. If you are entitled to special arrangements in order to fulfill the course requirements, please bring verification from the Office of Disabilities within the first two weeks of class.

## GRADING AND REQUIRED WORK:

Reading/Film Response Papers	25% (5 points each) - Four reading Responses, One Film Response
Group Work – Final Project	25% (You will receive a separate handout covering the group project.)
Class Participation	50%

This course is graded Pass/Fail. A passing grade will be 60% or higher, although I hope you strive for a higher performance than simply the minimum!

**Semester Project:** We will be working on a semester-long project that culminates in a simulation of the Central Round Table that took place in December 1989. Groups from this course will lead “teams” at a special event commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall on December 4. More details will follow on a separate hand-out.

**Please Note:** All course requirements must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the class. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are grounds for failing this course.

## Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:

What is Plagiarism? According to the UMASS Academic Regulations (2008-2009) Plagiarism is defined as “knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own work in any academic exercise. This includes submitting without citation, in whole or in part, prewritten term papers of another or the research of another, including but not limited to commercial vendors who sell or distribute such materials.” For more info please see page 7 of the regulations at <http://www.umass.edu/registrar/media/academicregs.pdf>.

**Honesty:** You may not engage in any form of academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating on exams, helping another person cheat, or plagiarizing on written assignments. This also includes fabricating excuses for absences from class and signing in for another student. If you are caught cheating at any point during the semester, you will fail the entire course and I report you to the Academic Honesty Board.

## Writing Center:

The university offers a special resource for students who want some additional assistance with writing and research. The Writing Center is located in the northwest corner of the W.E.B. DuBois Library's Learning Commons. For more information, please visit the WC Website: <http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter>. The web site also offers information about the Center, such as current hours of operation and what to bring with you for your first consultation.

## FILMS:

We have one film, *Good Bye, Lenin*, which everyone should see by the last day of the course. The DEFA Library here at UMass Amherst is offering a year-long film series (*Wendeflicks*) commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The complete schedule of films is not yet set, but

*Good Bye, Lenin!* (On reserve at the Du Bois Library)

Information about *Wendeflicks* can be found here:  
<http://www.umass.edu/defa/filmtour/wendeflicks.shtml>

A film schedule for *Wendeflicks* will be distributed when available.

## READINGS:

The readings for this course are comprised of a mixture of textbook readings and primary documents. Each week I expect you to have read both the assigned textbook chapter(s) and the assigned primary documents **prior** to coming to class each week.

**Textbook:** Please purchase the following book (available at the University Bookstore Textbook Annex)

Gareth Dale, *The East German Revolution of 1989* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2006)

**Primary Sources:** Follow the link to the online text (please bring printed copies to class)

Newspaper Report: Protest at Memorial March

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc12\\_2.pdf](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc12_2.pdf)

Kamnitzer's Accuses Dissidents of Treason in *Neues Deutschland*

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/files/download/1022/fullsize>

Opposition Charges Election Fraud

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%2016%20Doc%20%2014%20\\_2\\_.pdf](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%2016%20Doc%20%2014%20_2_.pdf)

Hopes of East German Opposition

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%201\\_Doc1\\_FIN.pdf](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%201_Doc1_FIN.pdf)

Stasi Report on Opposition

<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc15Intro.pdf>

Founding Appeal of New Forum

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1\\_Doc2\\_Eng.pdf](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc2_Eng.pdf)

Social Democratic Part (SDP) Founding Document (to be emailed)

SED Politburo Discusses Opposition Movement

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/414>

Erik Honecker on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the GDR

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=2877](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2877)

A Dissident Describes Police Brutality in Dresden

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=2878](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2878)

Leipzig October 9 Demonstration

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=230](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=230)

Egon Krenz's Government Program

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=2879](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2879)

Schabowski's Press Conference

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/449>

Fall of the Berlin Wall – Reports

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=174](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=174)

Goals of the Central Round Table

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1\\_Doc13English.pdf](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc13English.pdf)

SED/PDS Resolution for a New GDR

<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%201%20Doc%20%2014FIN.pdf>

Helmut Kohl's 10 Point Plan

[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1\\_Doc10.pdf](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc10.pdf)

CDU's Election Promises

<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch.%202,%20Doc.%2003FIN.pdf>

Election Victory for the "Alliance"

<http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Taz%20Election%20Victory%20English.pdf>

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

This is the intended series of themes for this course, though I reserve the right to make adjustments, if necessary, as the semester progresses. Following each lecture topic you will find the pertinent pages in the textbook. I recommend you do the reading in advance of coming to class for that day as it will help you to better follow the lecture.

Date	Subject	Readings
<b>Sept 8</b>	Overview of the 1980s under Communism in Eastern Europe	Newspaper Report: Protest at Memorial March <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc12_2.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc12_2.pdf</a> Kamnitzer's Accuses Dissidents of Treason in <i>Neues Deutschland</i> <a href="http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/files/download/1022/fullsize">http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/files/download/1022/fullsize</a>
<b>Sept 15</b>	The May 1989 Elections in East Germany	<b>Dale:</b> Chapter 1 Opposition Charges Election Fraud <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%2016%20Doc%20%2014%20_2_.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%2016%20Doc%20%2014%20_2_.pdf</a>
<b>Sept 22</b>	Opening the Escape Hatch: Hungary Opens its Borders to Austria	<b>Jarausch,</b> <i>The Rush to German Unity</i> (Chapter 1 – on SPARK) Hopes of East German Opposition <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%201_Doc1_FIN.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%201_Doc1_FIN.pdf</a> Stasi Report on Opposition <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc15Intro.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter16Doc15Intro.pdf</a>
<b>Sept 29</b>	The Summer of 1989: Honecker Announces “This Wall will stand for another 100 years”	Founding Appeal of New Forum <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc2_Eng.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc2_Eng.pdf</a> Dan Hamilton, “Dateline East Germany: The Wall behind the Wall, <i>Foreign Policy</i> , No. 77, Autumn 1989, pp. 176-197. <a href="http://www.jstor.org/stable/1148924">http://www.jstor.org/stable/1148924</a>
<b>Oct 6</b>	East Germans Storm the Gates of West German Embassies	<b>Childs:</b> <i>The Fall of the GDR</i> (Chapter 4 – on SPARK) SED Politburo Discusses Opposition Movement <a href="http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/414">http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/414</a>
<b>Oct 13</b>	No Class (Follow Monday Schedule)	Optional: Attend Film and Discussion with Andreas Dresen at Amherst Theater (7pm)
<b>Oct 20</b>	The GDR Turns Forty: Gorbachev Visits East Germany	<b>Childs:</b> <i>The Fall of the GDR</i> (Chapter 5 – on SPARK) Erik Honecker on the 40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the GDR <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2877">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2877</a> A Dissident Describes Police Brutality in Dresden <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2878">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2878</a>
<b>Oct 27</b>	Monday Demonstrations: Taking it to the streets	<b>Dale:</b> Chapters 2 & 3 Leipzig October 9 Demonstration <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=230">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=230</a>
<b>Nov 3</b>	The Turn: A New “Reform” Government Tries to Regain Control	<b>Dale:</b> Chapter 4 Egon Krenz's Government Program <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2879">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2879</a>
<b>Nov 10</b>	The Fall of the Wall	<b>Dale:</b> Chapter 5 Schabowski's Press Conference <a href="http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/449">http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/449</a> Fall of the Berlin Wall – Reports <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=174">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=174</a>

<b>Nov 17</b>	The Round Table: Moving Beyond Opposition	<b>Dale:</b> Chapter 6 Goals of the Central Round Table <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc13English.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc13English.pdf</a>  SED/PDS Resolution for a New GDR <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%201%20Doc%20%2014FIN.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch%20%201%20Doc%20%2014FIN.pdf</a>
<b>Nov 24</b>	May Elections 1990: Voting with their Feet	<b>Dale:</b> Chapters 7 & 8 Helmut Kohl's 10 Point Plan <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc10.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Chapter1_Doc10.pdf</a>  CDU's Election Promises <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch.%202,%20Doc.%2003FIN.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Ch.%202,%20Doc.%2003FIN.pdf</a> Election Victory for the "Alliance" <a href="http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Taz%20Election%20Victory%20English.pdf">http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Taz%20Election%20Victory%20English.pdf</a>
<b>Dec 1</b>	No Class Meeting	Special Event on Friday, <b>December 4 (4-7pm)</b>
<b>Dec 8</b>	What Remains: Dealing with the East German Past	<b>Dale:</b> Chapters 9, 10, & Conclusion View Film: <i>Good Bye, Lenin</i> (on reserve)