Department: Global Cultures and Languages
Course No: UI 462

Title of Course: Stalin’s “Hunger Games”: Soviet Women and the Totalitarian State
Date: Nov. 20, 2014

Perspectives: Individual Expression; Human Institutions
Categories: Literary Expression and Artistic Expression
Development of a Major Civilization, Political Systems, and Social Systems

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:

A study of Stalin’s Russia and the role of women through the prism of Suzanne Collins’s trilogy The Hunger Games. (3)

II. Prerequisite (s):
None

III. Purposes or Objectives of the Course:

A. To examine the fictional totalitarian state portrayed in Collins’s trilogy The Hunger Games, focusing on the roles played by economics, fashion, art, and media in sustaining the system. (Objectives 1, 2, 5, 8)

B. To examine the historical totalitarian state of Russia in the 1920s and 1930s, using The Hunger Games trilogy as an analytical frame, focusing on the economy, political system and society, namely, collectivization and industrialization; the emergence of the leader cult; the officially promoted models of New Soviet Men and Women and Communist values; social purges and political terror; conspicuous consumption and the materialization of new, privileged classes (the Stakhanovites and the Party elite). (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7)

C. To analyze historical films and novels produced to support the Russian totalitarian state, with attention to formal elements and symbolism. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 8)

D. To discuss Soviet heroes and villains in popular novels of the 1920s and 1930s: Aleksandra Kollontai’s Love of Worker Bees and Fedor Gladkov’s Cement. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8)

E. To study gender relationships and the Communist ethos as depicted in popular Soviet films Bed and Sofa (1927) and Circus (1936). (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4)

F. To integrate findings about Stalin’s Russia into a discussion of Putin’s Russia. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9)

IV. Student Learning Outcomes
A. Students will be able to list three Russian novels and two films from the 1920s and 1930s. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5)

B. Students will identify a novelist’s point of view, his or her characterization of protagonists and antagonists, and the novel’s symbolism. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

C. Students will carry out basic analyses of film elements: framing, mise-en-scene, and music, and the roles of these elements in creating a cinematic experience. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

V. Expectations of Students

A. To participate actively in all classes.

B. To read all assigned materials and attend three scheduled film showings.

C. To write an article report and a film report.

D. To demonstrate comprehension of the course material in a take-home midterm exam.

E. To prepare an oral group presentation that relates to the themes discussed in class, undertaking appropriate research and integrating individual parts into a coherent and smooth presentation.

F. To prepare an interdisciplinary final paper that shows a deeper engagement with the topics discussed over the course of the semester, e.g., a paper that shows connection(s) between two or more of Russia’s social, political, or cultural phenomena.

VI. Course Content or Outline

A. The framework for analysis
   1. Totalitarian systems: real and imagined 2 hours
   2. The Hunger Games trilogy 8 hours

B. Culture and political leadership
   1. Interrelationships between national culture and the style of the government/leader 1 hour
   2. Construction of collective and individual identities in the Russian totalitarian state 4 hours

C. Women’s identity in Stalin’s Russia
   1. The New Soviet Woman 4 hours
   2. Bolshevik “emancipation” of women 3 hours
   3. Leader cult 1 hour
   4. A view of the New Soviet Woman in Fedor Gladkov’s novel Cement 2 hours
   5. Aleksandra Kollontai, a Bolshevik feminist: Love of Worker Bees 3 hours
D. The arts as a sustaining force in a totalitarian state
   1. Cinema 1 hour
   2. Visual art 1 hour
   3. Literature 1 hour

E. The consumer and the state
   1. Everyday life under Stalin 4 hours
   2. Women and conspicuous consumption in the Socialist state 2 hours

F. Student Presentations 8 hours

VII. Textbook(s) and Course Materials:


Books on reserve:


Articles on Electronic Reserve (ERES) for article reports:


**DVDs Provided by Professor:**

A. The Hunger Games: Catching Fire, directed by Francis Lawrence (2013).
B. Bed and Sofa, directed by Abram Room (1927).
C. Circus, directed by Grigori Aleksandrov and I. Simkov (1936).

**VIII. Basis for Student Evaluation**

A. Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>90-100% = A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article report</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>80-89% = B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film report</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>70-79% = C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home midterm</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>60-69% = D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>below 60% = F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

B. Article Report and Film Report (2-3 pages each)

The article report will analyze an article approved by the instructor, including a summary and your comments. In the film report, students will analyze basic film elements (in a film viewed by the class): framing, mise-en-scene, and music, in creating a particular cinematic experience.

C. Take-home midterm

Students are expected integrate the material studied in the first half of the semester in response to questions posed by the instructor. Students have two days to complete the midterm and submit it electronically.

D. Group Presentation
Working as part of a group, students will prepare an oral presentation on a topic discussed in class and approved by the instructor.

E. Final Paper

In a 6-8 page interdisciplinary final paper, students will examine in more depth a topic discussed over the course of the semester, e.g., a paper that shows connection(s) between two or more of Russia's social, political, or cultural phenomena.

Signature: ________________________________ Date ________________________________
Chair

Signature: ________________________________ Date ________________________________
Dean
Course Number and Title: UI 462
Stalin’s “Hunger Games”: Soviet Women and the Totalitarian State

Class time and place: Tue/Thu 9.30-10.45 a.m., Art Building 301

Instructor: Dr. Victoria Rust
Office: Art 201C
Email: vyrust@semo.edu
Office Hours: Tue, Thu 11.00 -12.00 and by appointment

I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours of Course:

A study of Stalin’s Russia and the role of women through the prism of Suzanne Collins’s trilogy *The Hunger Games*. (3)

II. Course Description

In this course the bestselling trilogy “The Hunger Games” by Suzanne Collins provides a frame for discussing seminal events in Russia’s political and cultural history of the first half of the twentieth century. The fate of Collins’ heroine Katniss Everdeen will serve as a basis for analyzing how totalitarian systems attempt to determine women’s lives. Drawing from 1920s and 1930s Soviet propaganda art, novels, magazines, and films, as well as biographies of renowned women, we will then examine the types of heroines and villains in Stalin’s Russia. The course emphasizes the construction of individual and collective identities, and especially female identity, in both the nascent Soviet Union and the fictional Panem. We will discuss the interaction and relationship between the totalitarian state (both imaginary and real) and women, who conform to or resist its dominion. We will conclude the course with a discussion of how current developments in politics and popular culture reflect and shape reflections on Russia’s political past, present and future.

III. Purposes or Objectives of the Course:

A. To examine the fictional totalitarian state portrayed in Collins’s trilogy *The Hunger Games*, focusing on the roles played by economics, fashion, art, and media in sustaining the system. (Objectives 1, 2, 5, 8)

B. To examine the historical totalitarian state of Russia in the 1920s and 1930s, using *The Hunger Games* trilogy as an analytical frame, focusing on the economy, political system and society, namely, collectivization and industrialization; the emergence of the leader cult; the officially promoted models of New Soviet Men and Women and Communist values; social purges and political terror; conspicuous consumption and the materialization of new, privileged classes
(the Stakhanovites and the Party elite). (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 8)
C. To analyze historical films and novels produced to support the Russian totalitarian state, with attention to formal elements and symbolism. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 8)

D. To discuss Soviet heroes and villains in popular novels of the 1920s and 1930s: Aleksandra Kollontai’s *Love of Worker Bees* and Fedor Gladkov’s *Cement*. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8)

E. To study gender relationships and the Communist ethos as depicted in popular Soviet films *Bed and Sofa* (1927) and *Circus* (1936). (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4)

F. To integrate findings about Stalin’s Russia into a discussion of Putin’s Russia. (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9)

**IV. Student Learning Outcomes**

A. Students will be able to list three Russian novels and films from the 1920s and 1930s. (1, 2, 3, 5)

B. Students will identify a novelist’s point of view, his or her characterization of protagonists and antagonists, and the novel’s symbolism. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

C. Students will carry out basic analyses of film elements: framing, mise-en-scene, and music, and the roles of these elements in creating a cinematic experience. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

**V. Expectations of Students**

A. To participate actively in all classes.

B. To read all assigned materials and attend three scheduled film showings.

C. To write an article report and a film report.

D. To demonstrate comprehension of the course material in a take-home midterm exam.

E. To prepare an oral group presentation that relates to the themes discussed in class, undertaking appropriate research and integrating individual parts into a coherent and smooth presentation.

F. To prepare an interdisciplinary final paper that shows a deeper engagement with the topics discussed over the course of the semester, e.g., a paper that shows connection(s) between two or more of Russia’s social, political, or cultural phenomena.

**VI. Course Requirements: Required texts**


On Reserve:


D. Wilson, Leah, ed. The Girl who was on Fire. Your Favorite Authors on Suzanne Collins’s Hunger Games Trilogy. Dallas, Texas: BenBella Books, 2010.

E. Articles on Electronic Reserve (ERES) for article reports:


**DVDs Provided by Professor:**

B. *Bed and Sofa*, directed by Abram Room (1927).
C. *Circus*, directed by Grigori Aleksandrov and I. Simkov (1936).

**VII. Grading:**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article report</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film report</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Readings and Film Analysis**

You will be responsible for reading several novels and secondary literature (among them, articles on electronic reserve on MOODLE). There will be three required film showings scheduled over the course of the semester. Students will choose one film and one article for (written) analysis.

A significant portion of your grade is based on your active participation. Active participation is defined as verbally contributing to group, pair and individual activities **based upon your reading for the class and your attention to in-class assignments**. In other words, I expect you to be sharing and exchanging questions, comments, or reactions **to the material covered and/or homework assigned** regularly. It is ok to talk about Putin now and then, but in order to understand what is going on in Russia now we must learn some history first.

**Article Report**

Over the course of the semester, students will read a number of secondary sources, namely, book chapters or articles. These readings (called ERES, or electronic reserves) can be found on the instructor's website on Moodle. **Students are to read all assigned secondary literature.** During the second week of class, students will sign up for an article report. The report should be at least 2 pages double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font size and include your reactions in addition to summary. Use MLA style when citing your sources. Samples of article reports will be available for your convenience. **Article reports are due on the day assigned.** No late work will be accepted unless prior discussed with the instructor.

**Film Report**

Students are required to attend **all three scheduled film showings** and submit a written review of one of the three films. The review should be at least 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font size and include your reaction to the cultural reality presented in addition to the plot summary. Samples of film reports will be available for your convenience. **Film reports are due during the week following the film showing.** No late work will be accepted.
unless approved by the instructor.

**The Midterm**
The take-home midterm exam will be based on the material discussed in the first half of the semester: the novels and films as well as the themes and phenomena outlined in the secondary literature (the articles placed on electronic reserves on Moodle). The Midterm is due **Monday, October 19, 2015 by noon**. No late work will be accepted unless discussed with the instructor.

**Presentation**
Students will pick a topic for their presentation that relates to the themes discussed in class. A list of possible topics will be provided in class, and additional topics may be considered after consultation with the instructor. This is a group project, and students are required to demonstrate a coherent and smooth presentation of individual parts, as well as solid research. **Topic is due Thursday, November 12, 2015. Also, your group will meet with the instructor prior to presentation to discuss its format, length and sources.** In addition to the content, the manner of your presentation (e.g., your delivery and word choice) will be evaluated. The presentation should take no longer than 20 minutes.

**Final Paper**
In the final paper, students are expected to show a deeper engagement with the topics discussed over the course of the semester in class. Papers should be manageable in scope; reflect your analytical skills and the ability to prove your conclusions. **All topics should be approved by the instructor.** The topic and bibliography for the final paper is due before Thanksgiving break. The length of this paper should be between 6 and 8 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point-size font. Please use MLA style for citing sources. Final paper is due **Tuesday, December 15, 2015 by noon**. Submit a paper copy to the instructor’s mailbox in AB 201A and a digital copy via email attachment to vyrust@semo.edu.

**Extra Credit**
Students may write one additional article or film report for extra credit.

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**Academic Honesty Statement**
Students are bound by the University policy on academic integrity in all aspects of this course. **All references to ideas and texts other than the students' own must be so indicated through footnotes, quotation marks, endnotes, etc.** Information regarding the University academic integrity policy and cheating can be found here: [http://www.semo.edu/facultysenate/handbook/5d.htm](http://www.semo.edu/facultysenate/handbook/5d.htm).

**Accessibility Statement**
In recognition that people acquire knowledge differently and that their learning is often impacted by various factors (e.g., prior experience, study style and skill, learning disability), resources to aid student success are available on campus. Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at the Dearmont Hall, Wing B1, or by phone (573) 651-5927, or by going to [http://www.semo.edu/ds/facultyinfo.html](http://www.semo.edu/ds/facultyinfo.html) [http://www.semo.edu/pdf/old/ds_working_with_studentsS2.pdf](http://www.semo.edu/pdf/old/ds_working_with_studentsS2.pdf).
Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

**Civility Statement**
Every student at Southeast is obligated at all times to assume responsibility for his/her actions, to respect constituted authority, to be truthful, and to respect the rights of others, as well as to respect private and public property. In their academic activities, students are expected to maintain high standards of honesty and integrity and abide by the University’s Policy on Academic Honesty. Alleged violations of the Code of Student Conduct are adjudicated in accordance with the established procedures of the judicial system. For information, see: http://www.semo.edu/pdf/Conduct_Faculty_Resource_Guide.pdf

**Other Concerns**
Questions, comments or requests regarding this course or program should be taken to your instructor. Unanswered questions or unresolved issues involving this class should be taken to If you have concerns or questions, please contact Dr. Toni Alexander, Chair, Department of Global Cultures and Languages. Office: Art 203 A, tel. 651-2478, talexander@semo.edu.

**Semester Schedule Fall 2015**

**Please bring assigned readings to class.**

**Week 1 (Aug 23- Aug 29)**

- Session 1  Totalitarian systems: real and imagined
- Session 2  *The Hunger Games*, pp. 3-85

**Themes:** totalitarianism, democracy, autocracy, citizenship, civil rights, dictatorship of the proletariat

**Week 2 (Aug 30-Sep 5)**

- Session 1  *The Hunger Games*, pp.86-244; *Katniss the Cattail* pp.13-35
- Session 2  *The Hunger Games* pp.247-374
  - “Why so Hungry for the Hunger Games?” ERES on Moodle
  - Sign up for articles

**Themes:** symbols of power, power of symbols, injustice, propaganda, media as a means of control

**Film Showing** 1  *Catching Fire* (2013)

**Week 3 (Sep 6- Sep 12)**
Session 1  *Catching Fire*, pp.3-263
“Your Heart is a Weapon the Size of Your Fist”, *ERES*

Session 2  *Catching Fire*, pp.267-391
“Someone to Watch over me,”  *ERES*
“Panem et Circenses,”  *ERES*
Film reports are due
Articles reports are due

**Themes:** surveillance, love, totalitarianism, media, family, community, reality/utopia

**Week 4 (Sep 13- Sep 19)**

Session 1  *Mockingjay*, pp.3-151
“Crime of Fashion,”  *ERES*

Session 2  *Mockingjay*, pp. 152-261

**Themes:** fashion, sacrifice, love, war, justice, dictator, utopia

**Week 5 (Sep 20- Sep 26)**

Session 1  *Mockingjay*, pp. 265-390
“Community in the face of Tyranny,”  *ERES*

Session 2  *Everyday Stalinism,* (“The Party is always right” pp. 14-39)
“Russia after Lenin: Revolutionary Identity,” pp.1-19 *ERES*

**Themes:** the Bolsheviks, the Civil War, Communists, the dictatorship of the proletariat, backwardness, “leader practice”, NEP, “former people”

**Week 6 (Sep 27- Oct 3)**

Session 1  “A Feminist Bolshevik: Aleksandra Kollontai”  *ERES*
*Love of Worker Bees* (“Vasilisa Malugina” pp.15-57)

Session 2  *Love of Worker Bees*, pp. 57-135

**Themes:** feminism, Party; gender, class, New Woman, sexual relationships in the Soviet state
Film Showing II *The Bed and the Sofa* (1924)

**Week 7 (Oct 4- Oct 10)**

Session 1  *Love of Worker Bees*, pp.135-202
Session 2  *Everyday Stalinism*, (Family Problems, pp.140-163) and
“Russia after Lenin: Women: false promises, dashed hopes and the pretense of
emancipation” (pp. 134-154) *ERES*
Film reports are due

**Themes:** gender, communist morality, family and love under socialism

Week 8 (Oct 11- Oct 17)

Session 1 *Cement* pp. 1-74
Themes: New Woman, industrialization, gender relations versus building of socialism

Take home **MIDTERM EXAM DUE MONDAY, OCT 19, 2015 BY NOON**

**FALL BREAK**

Week 9 (Oct 18 –Oct 24)

Session 1  *Cement* pages TBD

Session 2  *Everyday Stalinism* (“Hard Times”, pp. 40-66 and “Insulted and Injured,” (pp.115-138)

Themes: collectivization, industrialization, exclusion, “former people”

Week 10  (Oct 25-Oct 31)

Session 1  “Constructing Utopia”, *ERES*

Session 2  “The Spatial Poetics of the Personality Cult: Circles around Stalin”, pp.19-30 *ERES*

Themes: New Man and New Woman, bourgeois, class, Stakhanovite movement, collectivization

Week 11 (Nov 1 –Nov 7)

Session 1  “The Art of Ruling” (pp.60-61, 64-69, 72-80) *ERES*

*Everyday Stalinism* (pp.164-178)

Session 2  “Cultural Revolutions” *ERES*

Themes: leader cult, censorship, Socialist Realism, Bolshevik culture, leader cult, art, propaganda

Week 12 (Nov 8- Nov 14)

Session 1  “All this Can be Yours!: Soviet Commercial Advertising and the Social Construction of
Space, 1928-1956,” ERES
“Luxuriating in Lack: Plentitude and Consuming Happiness in Soviet Paintings and Posters, 1930s-1950s ERES

Session 2  “‘The Best in the World’: The Discourse of the Moscow Metro in the 1930s” ERES
Presentation topic and group sign-up due

Themes: Culturedness, myth of abundance, Soviet advertising, “palaces” for people, metro

Week 13 (Nov 15 - Nov 21)

Session 2  “The Moral Universe of Dictatorship” (pp. 265-278, 290-293, 298-303) ERES

Topics for final papers are due

Themes: conspicuous consumption in the Socialist state; women and luxury

Final Film Showing  either Circus (1936) or Jolly Fellows (1934)

Week 14 (Nov 22- Nov 28)

Session 1  Everyday Stalinism, pp.190-209
Finalize your group date of presentation
Topic and preliminary bibliography for Final Paper Due

Themes: terror, purges, show trials, popular entertainment, Soviet film of the 1930s

Session 2  Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 (Nov 29- Dec 5)

Session 1  Presentations
Session 2  Presentations

Week 16 (Dec 6- Dec 12)

Session 1  Presentations
Session 2  Presentations

All extra credit book reports or film reports are due

Final Paper IS DUE TUESDAY, DEC 15 by noon. Submit a paper copy to the instructor’s mailbox in AB 201A and a digital copy via email attachment to vyrust@semo.edu.