

IDS 2935: Why Spy?

Quest 1: War and Peace

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- Spring 2025
- Attendance: 100% In-Person, No GTAs, 35 Residential
- Period: T 1:55pm – 2:45pm and Th 1:55pm – 3:50pm
- Location: Matherly 117 and Psychology 0151
- 3 Credits

Instructor

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- Office E510
- Office Hours: Th 9:00am – 12:00pm
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Course Description

Why spy? Spying has long been an important part of how countries relate to each other and defend themselves. But why do they do it? This semester, we will approach this question from several different perspectives by reading stories of Cold War espionage (both fiction and nonfiction).

We will examine it at a national level, asking what role intelligence plays in countries' foreign policy and international relations. We will examine it at a personal level, asking why people choose to join their countries' intelligence services, and why some people choose to spy on their own countries for foreign governments. We will also pose it skeptically, asking how we ought to think about morality and immorality in a world full of deception.

Along the way, we will also consider bigger questions that spy craft poses, and the implications of these questions for our everyday lives. What is the role of knowledge and information in decision-making? What level of uncertainty and risk are we willing to accept when making big decisions? How can we trust that what we know is true?

Quest and General Education Credit

- Quest 1

- Humanities
- Writing Requirement (WR) 2000 words

This course accomplishes the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Required Readings and Works

1. Graham Greene, *The Third Man* (USA, 1999). ISBN: 9780140286823.
2. Ben Macintyre, *The Spy and the Traitor* (New York, 2019). ISBN: 9781101904213.
3. John Le Carré, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (USA, 2011). ISBN: 9780143119784.
4. Other readings for the course are available as PDFs on Canvas.
5. The writing manual for this course is: *The Economist Style Guide*, 11th edn. (2015). ISBN: 9781610395755. This is available as a PDF on Canvas.
6. Materials and Supplies Fees: n/a.

Course Objectives

1. Identify, describe, and explain the structure of narratives and the literary devices used to drive those narratives in spy novels.
2. Identify, describe, and explain important events and themes in the history of Cold War espionage.
3. Analyze and evaluate the perspectives and arguments of the author and key characters.
4. Analyze and evaluate the differences among literary genres (e.g. fiction, biography, and history).
5. Analyze and evaluate the policy, political, and moral challenges that leaders faced while conducting espionage during the Cold War.
6. Develop and present clear and effective written and oral work that communicates well-supported ideas and arguments, and that demonstrates critical engagement with course texts and experiential learning activities.
7. Develop and present clear and effective written and oral work that articulates students' personal experiences and reflections on spies and spy craft.
8. Connect course content with students' intellectual, personal, and professional lives at UF and beyond.
9. Reflect on students' own and others' experience with spies and spy craft, in class discussion and written work.

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

1. **Active Participation and Attendance: 20%**
 - a. **Participation: 10%**
 - i. An exemplary participant shows evidence of having done the assigned reading before each class, consistently offers thoughtful points and questions for discussion, and listens considerately to other discussants. See participation rubric below. (R)
 - ii. Participation grades will be awarded in two installments: 5% of the grade will be awarded in Week 7 and 5% will be awarded at the end of the class.
 - b. **Class Attendance: 10%**
 - i. On-time class attendance is required for this component of the course grade. You may have two unexcused absences without any penalty, but starting with the third class missed your grade will be affected. Starting with the third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence reduces your attendance grade by 2 points.
 - ii. Except for absence because of religious holiday observance, documentation is required for excused absences, per university policy.
 - iii. You are late if you arrive 5 minutes or more after class has begun. Every 3 late arrivals will count as one absence when calculating your attendance grade.
2. **Experiential Learning Component (Library Session): 10%**
 - a. During the semester, the class will visit the Latin America and Caribbean Collection in the UF Smathers Library. Students will meet with Dr. Margarita Vargas-Betancourt, the collection's librarian, and other curators and examine primary source materials related to the Bay of Pigs invasion.
 - b. Students will write a 500-word reflection following the session about the materials, which will be due during week 6. The prompt will be distributed following the library session. See Canvas for instructions and more details.
 - c. A late assignment will be penalized 2 points for each day it is late: i.e. a reflection turned in late but within 24 hours will be penalized 2 points; a reflection turned in within 48 hours will be penalized 4 points, etc.
3. **In-Class Reading Quizzes: 20%**
 - a. Unannounced reading quizzes will be administered 5 times throughout the semester. They will test the student's knowledge of the week's readings, and may contain short-answer, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and/or multiple-choice questions. Professor will provide written feedback on your short-answer questions, where applicable. See the examination rubric below. (R)
 - b. Quiz dates: unannounced.
4. **Midterm Examination: 25%**
 - a. In Week 7, a midterm examination will be administered in class. The examination will be an in-class, 50-minute exam and may include essay, short-answer, true-false, fill-in-the-blank, and/or multiple-choice questions. Professor will provide written feedback on your essay and/or short-answer questions. See the examination rubric below. (R)
5. **Analytical Essay: 25%**
 - a. During Week 15, you will submit a 2,000- to 3,000-word analytical essay addressing a prompt provided to you in Week 5. You will develop an analytical argument based on your own thesis responding to the prompt, incorporating course material. Your paper must incorporate at least five course readings. See Canvas for more details. Professor will provide written feedback. See grading rubric below. (R)

- b. During Week 12, you will submit a draft of your essay. Professor will provide comments based on the “Analytical Essay” rubric included in this syllabus, which you will be expected to incorporate into the final draft. The draft itself will not be graded, but failure to submit a draft will reduce your grade on the Analytical Essay by 10 points.
- c. Professor will evaluate and provide written feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.
- d. A late assignment will be penalized 2 points for each day it is late: i.e. an essay turned in late but within 24 hours will be penalized 2 points; an essay turned in within 48 hours will be penalized 4 points, etc.
- e. The same late penalty also applies if you turn in your draft late; in such cases the penalty will be assessed against the essay’s final grade.
- f. You may want to access the university’s [Writing Studio](#).
- g. An additional writing guide website can be found at [OWL](#).
- h. See Writing Assessment Rubric on syllabus.

III. Annotated Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION

(JANUARY 14, 16)

On our first day of class, we will introduce the course—its content and syllabus—and ourselves. On our second day of class, we will consider two articles about why people spy published in the CIA’s journal *Studies in Intelligence*. We will use these articles to begin framing the questions that will guide our course.

Readings (29 pages):

1. Ursula M. Wilder, “The Psychology of Espionage,” *Studies in Intelligence* 61, no. 2 (June 2017): 19-36.
2. Randy Burkett, “An Alternative Framework for Agent Recruitment: From MICE to RASCLS,” *Studies in Intelligence* 57, no. 1 (March 2013): 7-17.

WEEK 2: *THE THIRD MAN*: WHAT MAKES A SPY NOVEL?

(JANUARY 21, 23)

This week we will review the characteristics of the spy novel as a genre, placing it in the larger context of spy craft and international relations. Students will analyze the style and structure of Graham Greene’s spy novel *The Third Man*, examining questions of risk, trust, and the morality of Greene’s characters.

Readings (64 pages):

1. Graham Greene, *The Third Man*, pp. 13-77.

WEEK 3: *THE THIRD MAN*: WHAT IS THE ATTRACTION OF SPY NOVELS?

(JANUARY 28, 30)

Students will explore the dynamics of the attraction of narratives about everyday people who get pulled into the world of spies. How do these narratives function? Continuing our reading of *The Third Man*, we will ask: Is there a hero in this story? Is there a discernable sense of right and wrong in the ending? What does this tell us about the world of spy craft?

Readings (79 pages):

1. Greene, *The Third Man*, pp. 78-157.

WEEK 4: *THE VERY BEST MEN: WHY SHOULD WE SPY?*

(FEBRUARY 4, 6)

This week our inquiry will broaden into larger issues of national security and intelligence, focusing on the development of spy services in early twentieth-century America. Among the questions we will ask is: Why did the United States create intelligence agencies in the 1940s? What role did the CIA play in the Cold War, and why?

Readings (59 pages):

1. Evan Thomas, *The Very Best Men*, pp. 15-43, 107-126, 164-173.

WEEK 5: *THE VERY BEST MEN: WHAT COULD GO WRONG?*

(FEBRUARY 11, 13)

What happens when national security is imperiled when spy services fail? This week we will examine the case study of the Bay of Pigs. How do we explain the failure of the Bay of Pigs operation? What does this story tell us about the bigger moral and philosophical problems with spying? On Tuesday, February 11, we will visit the Latin America and Caribbean Collection in the UF Smathers Library for our Experiential Learning Component (Library Session).

Readings (36 pages):

1. Thomas, *The Very Best Men*, pp. 237-272.

Assignments:

1. Analytical Essay prompt distributed (Monday, February 10)

WEEK 6: *THE SPY AND THE TRAITOR: SPIES AND THEIR REASONS*

(FEBRUARY 18, 20)

This week we will examine the figure of Oleg Gordievsky, a spy who first joined the KGB, and then chose to spy for British intelligence. By examining the motivations of one spy to betray his own country, we will examine the utility of the double-agent, looking at how multiple levels of deception operate in such instances.

Readings (82 pages):

1. Ben Macintyre, *The Spy and the Traitor*, pp. 1-83.

Assignments:

1. Experiential Learning Component Reflection due (Monday, February 17)

WEEK 7: *THE SPY AND THE TRAITOR*: SPIES AND WORLD POLITICS
(FEBRUARY 25, 27)

Continuing our examination of Gordievsky, we will look at the details of his role as a spy for British intelligence. Students will analyze elements of spy craft and reflect on the role luck played in his usefulness. How can we view his choices in the larger context of intelligence services and their place in international relations? What was the broader context of the story?

Readings (97 pages):

1. Macintyre, *The Spy and the Traitor*, pp. 84–159, 175–197.

Assignments:

1. First-half participation grades awarded (Friday, February 28)

WEEK 8: *THE SPY AND THE TRAITOR*: MORAL DILEMMAS
(MARCH 4, 6)

Gordievsky's escape to the United Kingdom involved several morally agonizing decisions that had to be made amid great uncertainty. What gambles was he taking? Would we make the same decisions in the same circumstances? Students will reflect on issues of morality and elements of risk-taking in this week's readings and discussion.

Readings (47 pages):

1. Macintyre, *The Spy and the Traitor*, pp. 198–220, 246–250, 312–330.

WEEK 9: THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: HOW DO LEADERS USE INTELLIGENCE?
(MARCH 11, 13)

This week we will flip the script: rather than looking at spies themselves, we will look at how national leaders use information attained through espionage. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, President John F. Kennedy and his advisors needed a lot of information very quickly if they were going to successfully confront the Soviets. What did they know; what did they not know; and how did their knowledge affect their decision-making?

Readings (76 pages):

1. May and Zelikow (eds.), *The Kennedy Tapes*, pp. 30–53, 73–105, 296–319.

Assignments:

1. In-Class Midterm Examination (Tuesday, March 11)

SPRING BREAK
(MARCH 17-21: NO CLASS THIS WEEK)

WEEK 10: *TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY*: INTRODUCTION
(MARCH 25, 27)

We will analyze Le Carré's method of developing characters and revealing his story. Comparing this week's readings with those of our first two weeks, we will compare Le Carré's depiction of spying with Greene's depictions. How do Le Carré's many characters operate differently than Greene's? Is deception depicted differently in the two books? How does Le Carré develop his narrative?

Readings (78 pages):

1. John Le Carré, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, pp. 3-81.

WEEK 11: *TINKER TAILOR*: THE CRAFT AND NARRATIVE OF SPY CRAFT
(APRIL 1, 3)

This week we will compare Le Carré's stylistic methods in crafting his narrative to spy craft itself. We will discuss the new characters Le Carré introduces and his method of characters' storytelling to reveal information. We will also discuss the beginning of his main character Smiley's investigation.

Readings (77 pages):

1. Le Carré, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, pp. 82-159.

Assignments:

1. Analytical Essay draft due (Monday, March 31)

WEEK 12: *TINKER TAILOR*: PERSONAL INTEGRITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY
(APRIL 8, 10)

Using the framework of Le Carré's narrative, students will investigate the role of personal character in the success of certain intelligence agencies. What role does integrity play in spy craft? Can national security agencies ensure the integrity of their agents, and if so, how? We will continue our discussion of Smiley's investigation and the shape of Le Carré's narrative.

Readings (87 pages):

1. Le Carré, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, pp. 160-247.

WEEK 13: *TINKER TAILOR*: UNCERTAINTY
(APRIL 15, 17)

This week students will examine the limits of uncertainty for intelligence agents, reflecting on such questions in their own lives. Psychologically, morally, and ethically, how do we deal with various levels of uncertainty in our own decision-making? We will discuss how Le Carré begins to wind down his story, looking at scenes that involve individuals making decisions in the face of grave uncertainty.

Readings (71 pages):

1. Le Carré, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, pp. 248–319.

WEEK 14: *TINKER TAILOR*: CONCLUSION
(APRIL 22)

This week we will consider the end of Smiley's investigation. How does he catch the spy? What do we make of the way Le Carré concludes his story? We will also compare Le Carré's narrative to the story of Oleg Gordievsky.

Readings (61 pages):

1. Le Carré, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, pp. 320–381.

Assignments:

2. Analytical Essay due (Monday, April 21)

IV. Grading Scale and Rubrics

Grading Scale

For information on UF's grading policies for assigning grade points, see [here](#).

A	94 - 100%		C	74 - 76%
A-	90 - 93%		C-	70 - 73%
B+	87 - 89%		D+	67 - 69%
B	84 - 86%		D	64 - 66%
B-	80 - 83%		D-	60 - 63%
C+	77 - 79%		E	<60

Grading Rubrics

Participation Rubric

A (90-100%)	Typically comes to class with pre-prepared questions about the readings. Engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others and consistently elevates the level of discussion.
B (80-89%)	Does not always come to class with pre-prepared questions about the reading. Waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.
C (70-79%)	Attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant in discussion. Is only adequately prepared for discussion.
D (60-69%)	Fails to attend class regularly and is inadequately prepared for discussion. Is an unwilling participant in discussion.
E (<60%)	Attends class infrequently and is wholly unprepared for discussion. Refuses to participate in discussion.

Examination Rubric: Essays and Short Answers

	Completeness	Analysis	Evidence	Writing
A (90-100%)	Shows a thorough understanding of the question. Addresses all aspects of the question completely.	Analyses, evaluates, compares and/or contrasts issues and events with depth.	Incorporates pertinent and detailed information from both class discussions and assigned readings.	Presents all information clearly and concisely, in an organized manner.
B (80-89%)	Presents a general understanding of the question. Completely addresses most aspects of the question or address all aspects incompletely.	Analyses or evaluates issues and events, but not in any depth.	Includes relevant facts, examples and details but does not support all aspects of the task evenly.	Presents information fairly and evenly and may have minor organization problems.
C (70-79%)	Shows a limited understanding of the question. Does not address most aspects of the question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating accurate, relevant facts.	Includes relevant facts, examples and details, but omits concrete examples, includes inaccurate information and/or does not support all aspects of the task.	Lacks focus, somewhat interfering with comprehension.
D (60-69%)	Fails fully to answer the specific central question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating vague, irrelevant, and/or inaccurate facts.	Does not incorporate information from pertinent class discussion and/or assigned readings.	Organizational problems prevent comprehension.
E (<60%)	Does not answer the specific central question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events.	Does not adduce any evidence.	Incomprehensible organization and prose.

Writing Rubric

	Thesis and Argumentation	Use of Sources	Organization	Grammar, mechanics and style
A (90-100%)	Thesis is clear, specific, and presents a thoughtful, critical, engaging, and creative interpretation. Argument fully supports the thesis both logically and thoroughly.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are well incorporated, utilized, and contextualized throughout.	Clear organization. Introduction provides adequate background information and ends with a thesis. Details are in logical order. Conclusion is strong and states the point of the paper.	No errors.
B (80-89%)	Thesis is clear and specific, but not as critical or original. Shows insight and attention to the text under consideration. May have gaps in argument's logic.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are incorporated but not contextualized significantly.	Clear organization. Introduction clearly states thesis, but does not provide as much background information. Details are in logical order, but may be more difficult to follow. Conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all loose ends.	A few errors.
C (70-79%)	Thesis is present but not clear or specific, demonstrating a lack of critical engagement to the text. Argument is weak, missing important details or making logical leaps with little support.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are mostly incorporated but are not properly contextualized.	Significant lapses in organization. Introduction states thesis but does not adequately provide background information. Some details not in logical or expected order that results in a distracting read. Conclusion is recognizable but does not tie up all loose ends.	Some errors.
D (60-69%)	Thesis is vague and/or confused. Demonstrates a failure to understand the text. Argument lacks any logical flow and does not utilize any source material.	Primary and/or secondary texts are almost wholly absent.	Poor, hard-to-follow organization. There is no clear introduction of the main topic or thesis. There is no clear conclusion, and the paper just ends. Little or no employment of logical body paragraphs.	Many errors.
E (<60%)	There is neither a thesis nor any argument.	Primary and/or secondary texts are wholly absent.	The paper is wholly disorganized, lacking an introduction, conclusion or any logical coherence.	Scores of errors.

V. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the Quest the General Education student learning outcomes for Humanities (H).

Humanities (H) Humanities courses must afford students the ability to think critically through the mastering of subjects concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy, and must include selections from the Western canon.

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Content: *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline(s).*

- Identify, describe, and explain the structure of narratives and the literary devices used to drive those narratives in spy novels (Quest 1, H). **Assessment:** in-class reading quizzes, class participation.
- Identify, describe, and explain important events and themes in the history of Cold War espionage (Quest 1, H). **Assessment:** midterm exam, analytical essay, in-class reading quizzes, class participation.

Critical Thinking: *Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*

- Analyze and evaluate the perspectives and arguments of the author and key characters (Quest 1, H). **Assignments:** midterm exam, analytical essay, class participation.
- Analyze and evaluate the differences among literary genres (e.g. fiction, biography, and history) (Quest 1, H). **Assessments:** class participation, analytical essay.
- Analyze and evaluate the policy, political, and moral challenges that leaders faced while conducting espionage during the Cold War (Quest 1, H). **Assessments:** midterm exam, analytical essay, class participation.

Communication: *Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*

- Develop and present clear and effective written and oral work that communicates well-supported ideas and arguments, and that demonstrates critical engagement with course texts and experiential learning activities (Quest 1, H). **Assessments:** experiential learning component, midterm exam, analytical essay, class participation.
- Develop and present clear and effective written and oral work that articulates students' personal experiences and reflections on spies and spy craft (Quest 1, H). **Assessments:** experiential learning component, class participation.

Connection: *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*

- Connect course content with students' intellectual, personal, and professional lives at UF and beyond. (Quest 1). **Assessments:** experiential learning component, class participation.
- Reflect on students' own and others' experience with spies and spy craft, in class discussion and written work (Quest 1). **Assessments:** class participation, analytical essay, experiential learning component.

VI. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Experiential Learning Component

During the semester, the class will visit the Latin America and Caribbean Collection in the UF Smathers Library. Students will meet with Dr. Margarita Vargas-Betancourt, the collection's librarian, and other curators and examine materials related to spies and spying. Students will experience handling these materials with their own hands and examining them directly. They will write a 500-word reflection following the session about the materials. The prompt will be distributed following the library session.

2. Details of Self-Reflection Component

Self-reflection is built into many of the assignments, primarily through the in-class discussions and the experiential learning component's reflection assignment. In these opportunities for self-reflection offered by specific activities throughout the course, students will reflect on the broader implications of the themes of the course, considering the impact to themselves and/or to a wider community.

VII. Required Policies

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found [here](#).

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available [here](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [this link](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [GatorEvals Public Data](#).