

RUSSIAN (Div I)

Chair: Professor Gail Newman

Professors: J. van de Stadt and J. Cassidy; Assistant Professor: O. Kim; Visiting Assistant Professor: P. Orte;

Teaching Associate: Ilana Yesehin

On leave: O. Kim

LANGUAGE STUDY

The department provides language instruction to enable students to acquire all five linguistic skills: understanding, speaking, reading, writing, and culture. Russian 101-W88-102 covers the basics of Russian grammar. Russian 103 through 202 offer additional instruction in grammar and vocabulary acquisition, and provide extensive practice in reading and conversation.

STUDY ABROAD

The department strongly encourages students who want fluency in Russian to spend a semester or year studying in Russia or one of the former Soviet republics. Students generally apply to one of several approved foreign study programs. Russian 104 or the equivalent and junior standing are normally prerequisite for study abroad.

FAQ

Students MUST contact departments/programs BEFORE assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?

No, generally not until after a student returns and can provide course material for review (e.g. completed work such as exams, portfolios, lab reports and the like).

What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?

In Addition to course title and description, we always have a conversation with our students about the actual work they completed since sometimes syllabi are vague, or not followed with complete thoroughness.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?

Yes, four courses.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?

No.

Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?

No, the only candidate for this would be the Senior Seminar, and it has never been an issue.

Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)

No.

Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn't:

None to date.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE IN TRANSLATION

The department regularly offers courses on Russian literature, culture, and politics in English for those students who have little or no knowledge of Russian, but who wish to become acquainted with Russian literary, cultural, and social history.

THE CERTIFICATE IN RUSSIAN

To enhance a student's educational and professional profiles, the Certificate in Russian offers a useful tool for using the language in a wide variety of disciplines. The sequence of language and culture courses is designed to supplement a student's major at Williams by enabling the student to expand their knowledge in a related field.

Students who enter Williams with previous training in Russian may substitute more advanced courses for all the 100-level courses; they can also be exempted from up to two of the required courses. Thus, in order to earn a certificate a student must take no fewer than five courses (including three

courses in Russian) after enrolling at Williams. The student must achieve proficiency at the level of a B in RUSS 251 or the equivalent.

Required Courses

101

102

103

104

one additional course conducted in Russian

Elective Courses

at least one course on Russian cultural history

at least one course on Russian intellectual, political, or social history, or post-Soviet economics

THE MAJOR

The Russian major offers students an interdisciplinary approach to the intellectual and cultural history of Russia and the former Soviet republics. Students complete the major by combining courses in Russian language and literature with courses in history, political science, music, economics, and art. The major requires a minimum of ten courses of which at least six must be conducted in Russian, at least two must be at the 300-level, and one at the 400-level. In addition, students may take up to four related courses offered by other departments and taught in English.

Examples of appropriate courses in other departments are:

HIST 241 Imperial Russia

SOC 248 Post-Soviet Paradoxes

HIST 337 After Stalin: Soviet History

PSCI 286 Russian Politics and Foreign Policy under Vladimir Putin

Students selecting the major must typically complete Russian 104 or 152 (or the equivalent) by the end of the junior year. Majors will normally be expected to take the 400-level seminar offered in their senior year, even if they have previously taken another version of it. Russian majors may receive major credit for summer language study (in consultation with the department) and for as many as four courses taken during study abroad.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN RUSSIAN

At the beginning of the second semester of the senior year, students may nominate themselves to candidacy for the degree with honors. By the end of the junior year at the latest, however, they will have established in consultation with the department their qualifications for embarking on the project, the pattern of study to be followed, and the standards of performance.

Students earn a degree with honors by submitting a senior thesis (493-W31-494) of honors quality.

RUSS 101 (F) Elementary Russian I

An introduction to contemporary standard Russian, this course provides opportunities to acquire basic proficiency in all five language skills--listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture--through immersion, intensive use of authentic materials, and a strong emphasis on the spoken word in all class activities. Greater emphasis is placed on writing in the second semester. For students who already know some Russian, consultation with the department is required before registering for any Russian language course in the sequence 101 through 252.

Class Format: this class meets five times a week

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, completion of all assignments, regular summative exercises, written and oral final exercises

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: first-and second-year students; students expressing an interest in the Russian major or certificate; students who need to learn Russian for research purposes

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: students who continue on to 102 are required to attend and to pass the sustaining program during the winter study period.

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2025

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Peter A. Orte

RUSS 102 (S) Elementary Russian II

An introduction to contemporary standard Russian, this course provides opportunities to acquire basic proficiency in all five language skills-listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture-through immersion, intensive use of authentic materials, and a strong emphasis on the spoken word in all class activities. Greater emphasis is placed on writing in this semester. For students who already know some Russian, consultation with the department is required before registering for any Russian language course in the sequence 101 through 202.

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, completion of homework assignments, regular quizzes, and a final exam, both oral and written.

Prerequisites: RUSS 101 or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: students expressing an interest in the Russian major or Russian-language certificate and students who need to learn Russian for research purposes

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: Student do not need to take RUSS 101 in order to receive credit for RUSS 102.

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2026

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Julie A. Cassidy

RUSS 103 (F) Intermediate Russian I

This course develops all five skills--listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture--for students who have completed at least one year of college-level Russian. Coursework includes a systematic review of Russian grammar, as well as an examination of a variety of authentic materials from Russian and Russophone cultures, current events, and daily life.

Requirements/Evaluation: completion of daily homework assignments, oral and written assessments, active class participation. This course meets three times per week with the instructor and once per week with the course TA at a time to be determined on the first day of class.

Prerequisites: students who passed RUSS102 or its equivalent

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Students who major, or are planning to major, in Russian, or students seeking a Russian-language certificate

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2025

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Olga Kim

RUSS 104 (S) Intermediate Russian

This course continues to develop all five skills--listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and culture--for students who have completed at least three semesters of college-level Russian. Coursework includes the ongoing study of Russian grammar, especially of increasing complexity, as well as an examination of a variety of authentic materials from Russian and Russophone cultures, current events, and daily life. Significant attention will be devoted to vocabulary expansion. Students who complete the yearlong sequence of RUSS 103 and RUSS 104 should be well prepared to

undertake study abroad in Russia and are encouraged to do so.

Class Format: the class meets four hours a week: three with the professor and the fourth with the Russian Teaching Associate (time to be arranged)

Requirements/Evaluation: Daily class participation and preparation, completion of all assignments and exercises, in and out of class. This course meets three times per week with the instructor and once per weeks with the course TA.

Prerequisites: RUSS 103 or the equivalent; consult with instructor if unsure

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Russian Majors and language certificate seekers, then students of Russian language, literature, history or culture.

Expected Class Size: 5-10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2026

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Peter A. Orte

RUSS 201 (F) Advanced Russian I

This course continues to develop all five skills--conversation, listening comprehension, reading, culture, and writing--for students who have completed at least two years of college-level Russian or the equivalent. Coursework includes the study of higher-level Russian grammar, as well as an examination of a variety of materials--print and other media--from Russian and Russophone cultures, current events, history, and the arts.

Class Format: Class meets with the instructor three times per week, and once a week with the Teaching Associate at a time and place TBA.

Requirements/Evaluation: regular attendance, active class participation, completion of all daily homework as well regular written and oral assignments both in and out of class

Prerequisites: Russian 104 or the equivalent, consult with the instructor if unsure

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors and language certificate seekers; students of Russian language, history, and culture

Expected Class Size: 5

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2025

SEM Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Peter A. Orte

RUSS 202 (S) Advanced Russian II

This course continues to develop all five skills--conversation, listening comprehension, reading, culture, and writing--for students who have completed at least two years of college-level Russian or the equivalent. Coursework includes the study of higher-level Russian grammar, as well as an examination of a variety of materials--print and other media--from Russian and Russophone cultures, current events, history, and the arts.

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, oral and written assignments both in and out of class, 4-5 short essays, 4-5 summative exercises, 2 oral assessments. This course will meet several times per week with the instructor and once per week with the course TA at a time to be determined on the first day of class.

Prerequisites: RUSS 201 or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors and language-certificate seekers, as well as students of Russian language, history, and culture

Expected Class Size: 5

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2026

SEM Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Olga Kim

RUSS 203 (F) Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature in Translation

Cross-listings: COMP 203

Primary Cross-listing

This course will introduce you to some of the most influential literary texts of the nineteenth-century Russian literature that became moral, ideological, and aesthetic touchstones for all later periods of Russian culture. We will study the works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Chernyshevsky, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Chekhov with attention to their thematic and aesthetic preoccupations, socio-political and philosophical contributions, and historical contexts. Topics of particular interest include Russia's national and imperial identity; Russia's experiment in Westernization; questions of religion and science; the fluctuating meanings of social class and rebellion. By the end of this course, you will have acquired a basic understanding of the history, aesthetics, and politics of nineteenth-century Russian literary culture, as well as its broader legacy. You will have strengthened your reading and writing skills through training to read primary texts closely and analytically. All readings are in English.

Requirements/Evaluation: Daily reading responses and class participation; one presentation and leading a discussion; Midterm paper illustrating the practice of close reading; Final research paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors or prospective majors, Russian certificate seekers, Comparative literature majors

Expected Class Size: 19

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RUSS 203(D1) COMP 203(D1)

Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies

Fall 2025

SEM Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Olga Kim

RUSS 204 (S) Russian and Soviet Cinema on History: The Imperial Trace

Cross-listings: COMP 204 / GBST 204

Primary Cross-listing

This course surveys history of the twentieth-century Russia and the Soviet Union through the prism of the cinematic medium. We will watch and analyze key films of this period--films by Eisenstein, Vertov, Tarkovsky, Shepit'ko, Balabanov, and Fedorchenko among others--from a double perspective. On the one hand, we will study the cultural and historical contexts of the Soviet Union and Russia; on the other hand, we will learn the formal and stylistic aspects of the cinematic medium. From this double perspective, we will try to answer the following questions: How does cinema reflect and reframe Russia's and Soviet Union's imperial legacy? How does political "thaws" and "freezes" in the region change cinema as an industry and as an artform? What can we learn from the cinema of this period about the current war that Russia is waging against Ukraine? What kind of history we can learn through analyzing cinematic medium? In other words, we will take cinema neither simply as a direct reflection of state ideology nor as pure aesthetic form or entertainment for the masses. Rather, we will approach the films of this period as audio-visual texts that are rich in historical content and require our informed and attentive interpretation. By the end of this course, you will acquire a wide-ranging knowledge about the twentieth-century Russian and Soviet cinema, history, and culture. Upon successful completion of the course, you will train your eyes to enrich your film watching experience and sharpen your thinking about cinema as a medium to understand culture and history. To do so you will practice analyzing film style, reading scholarly texts critically, and writing about it.

Requirements/Evaluation: For each class you'll watch 1 or 2 film(s) and read typically 1 article under 20 pages. You will submit short viewing response before each class. Additionally, there will be short viewing or creative assignments to familiarize students with formal aspects of film. Evaluation will be based on participation, one presentation, short sequence analysis, and final paper or video essay

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: declared or prospective Russian or Comparative Literature majors, Russian Certificate seekers, Global Studies concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 204(D1) RUSS 204(D1) GBST 204(D2)

Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 209 (F) Siberia: Region Making and Imperial Imagination in Russia

Cross-listings: ANTH 209

Secondary Cross-listing

Siberia is often framed as an essential part of Russia and a repository of all that is Russian. However, imaginations of Siberia also paint contradictory images of the region: as a heaven or a hell, a wasteland or a breadbasket, a place of freedom or a place of imprisonment, a Russian colony or as the Russian heartland. This course takes as its root that Siberia is not any one thing and not any one place. Rather, Siberia is an idea and set of representations that change over time. In this course, we will analyze and unpack this idea. The course asks: what is Siberia; how did Siberia become so integral to Russia and ideas of Russianness; who defines Siberia; what are the images of Siberia and for whom do they matter; and what do these imaginations of Siberia facilitate and obscure? To answer these questions, we will engage in an interdisciplinary study of Siberia incorporating ethnography, history, film, and literature. The primary goal of the course is to expose students to the various ways Siberia has been imagined, who it has been imagined and represented by, and how these imaginations and representations have lives of their own. In doing so, the course will help students view Russia through its peripheries rather than through Moscow and Saint Petersburg and will enable students to grapple with how "regions" are created.

Requirements/Evaluation: Regular GLOW posts and participation in classroom discussion, a midterm paper, and a hybrid reflective and analytic paper comparing imaginations of Siberia with place from their own life that has been highly imagined.

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Majors in Anthropology and Sociology and majors and certificate-seekers in Russian.

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RUSS 209(D1) ANTH 209(D2)

Fall 2025

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

RUSS 217 (S) Indigeneity Today: Comparative Indigenous Identities in the US and Russia (DPE) (WS)

Cross-listings: GBST 219 / ANTH 217

Secondary Cross-listing

Indigenous movements for land, rights, and cultural preservation have spread to and originated in all corners of the world. However, the global nature of these movements at times obscures ways of being Indigenous in differing contexts. This course analyzes Indigeneity in both the United States and Russia today. Through reading and analyzing ethnography, theory, and literature, it focuses on Indigenous peoples in a comparative context. Rather than prioritizing concern with Indigenous peoples emerging from the US, it attempts to demonstrate what Indigeneity has been in both the United States and Russia and what it is and means today. It asks the following questions: what is Indigeneity and who is Indigenous; how is Indigenous identity constructed and by whom; and what convergences and divergences exist in Indigeneity between the US and Russia or for that matter in other

contexts? To help answer these questions, in this course we will grapple with Indigeneity as a social category and other social formations, especially ethnicity, nationality, and race. Topics include: Indigeneity and the State, Revitalization and Resurgence, Indigenous People and Nature Protection, and Hemispheric and Global Indigeneities.

Requirements/Evaluation: 10 posts to the course Glow discussion page, 3 times leading class discussion on the assigned readings, 1 extended portfolio project with regular shorter and longer writing submissions, and 1 final paper and final presentation (as the final part of the portfolio).

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: Majors and certificate-seekers in Russian, then majors in Anthropology and Sociology, and then Global Studies concentrators

Expected Class Size: 12-15

Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RUSS 217(D1) GBST 219(D2) ANTH 217(D2)

Writing Skills Notes: This course has the following assignments: Weekly post to the Glow discussion page, 1 extended project with regular writing submissions, 1 final paper and final presentation. For the extended project, we will have instructor feedback for all project assignments. In instructor feedback, comprehension of the material and the content of the writing, improvement in writing style and clarity, and development of voice will be discussed. There will also be peer feedback/review.

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: In the course, students will learn about Indigeneity as a context-specific social formation. It understands Indigeneity as a category of difference with past and present importance. We will read about, discuss, and write about Indigeneity as a social category, along with other social categories it arose alongside (such as race, ethnicity, and nationality), and how it has been mobilized by both those who identify as Indigenous and by those who designate others as Indigenous.

Spring 2026

SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

RUSS 219 (F) Cults of Personality (WS)

Cross-listings: COMP 215

Primary Cross-listing

First uttered by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in 1956, the phrase "cult of personality" was formulated to discredit the hero-worship that accompanied Joseph Stalin's iron-fisted rule of the Soviet Union. Since then, the phrase has gained currency as a condemnation of a variety of seemingly all-powerful leaders in oppressive political regimes, including China's Mao Zedong, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, and the ruling Kim family in North Korea. In this course, we will examine the phenomenon of the cult of personality from a variety of perspectives, beginning with the cult surrounding Stalin and ending with that of Vladimir Putin. Our course material will encompass scholarship from multiple disciplines, including history, sociology, political science, cultural and media studies, as well as artistic expression typically labeled propaganda in literature, the visual arts, and film. Although our course will begin in the Soviet Union and end in contemporary Russia, we will explore how the cult of personality has been adapted and updated for different cultural and political purposes in fascist Germany and Spain, China, Iran, North Korea, and Cuba. *All readings will be in English, and all films will have English subtitles.*

Requirements/Evaluation: completion of weekly reading and writing assignments, as well as active engagement during tutorial sessions

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: first-year students

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 215(D1) RUSS 219(D1)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will be writing papers (5-6 pages) every other week and receiving detailed feedback on their writing with the expectation that they will identify areas in need of improvement and work on these throughout the semester. The course will also require that students write one paper together with their tutorial partner and that they rewrite two different papers, one at midterm and the other at the end of the term.

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 298 (S) The Caucasus and Captive Imagination (DPE)

This course is about the Caucasus as a real place in the modern imagination - a place often defined by conflict and unfulfilled desires to escape. This ancient and culturally diverse mountain range (medieval Arabic travelers called it "the mountain of languages") marked the boundary between Europe and Asia in antiquity. It was the mythological home of Medea and the place of Prometheus' punishment. Keeping this background in mind, we will begin our study of the Caucasus in the modern imagination by reading 19th century Russian classics (Pushkin, Lermontov, and Tolstoy) in whose works the Caucasus appears as a "frontier" for exploring questions of freedom, oppression, and the boundaries between the strange and familiar. As we set these works in their historical context (i.e., the Russian conquest of the Caucasus and contemporary developments in Western European literature), we will compare them to responses by native Caucasian writers of the period. In particular, we will question the relationship between literature, national awareness, imperialism, and revolt: What role did the Caucasus play in the formation of Russian literature? How did this literature serve the Russian imperial project? How did it express resistance? How did non-Russian authors, whose literary traditions sometimes predated written Russian, imagine their place in these events? To bring our study to bear on the region's present and future, we will also study how the Soviet imagination affected this land and its peoples through representative works of literature and film and how contemporary writers respond to this legacy in the context of Chechnya and Karabakh. All readings will be in English.

Requirements/Evaluation: Students will buy 5-6 books and pick up a course packet. Students will write several short response papers, short papers (3-5 pages), and complete one larger project (10-15 pages).

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: Students in the Russian Department

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course will treat the history of the imperial conquest of the Caucasus and the role that literature played within it by looking at the Russian use of orientalist rhetoric as well as how that rhetoric was subverted by Russian and non-Russian authors. We will study how Russian writers, who were sent to the Caucasus for political offenses, nevertheless supported the imperial conquest. Finally, we will look at post-Soviet nationalism and Neo-Imperial projects.

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 305 (F) Dostoevsky and the Meaning of Life

Cross-listings: COMP 305

Primary Cross-listing

This course surveys the works of the great Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky, whose oeuvre represents a life-long quest to uncover the meaning of life. Readings include Dostoevsky's major novels, *Crime and Punishment*, *Demons*, and *The Brothers Karamazov*, as well as several shorter works, including *Notes from Underground*. We will also examine Dostoevsky's journalism, so that we understand how he answers life's most troubling questions in the social and political context of his day, as well as what role artistic representation plays in these answers. *All readings will be in English.*

Requirements/Evaluation: willingness and ability to complete lengthy reading assignments, active class participation, two short papers, and final project

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 40

Enrollment Preferences: Russian and Comp Lit majors, as well as those seeking the Russian Certificate

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 305(D1) RUSS 305(D1)

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 306 (S) Tolstoy and the Meaning of Life

Cross-listings: COMP 306

Primary Cross-listing

This course examines the works of the great Russian writer Lev Tolstoy, whose stories and novels represent a life-long quest to uncover the meaning of life. Readings include Tolstoy's two major novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, as well as several shorter works, such as *The Death of Ivan Ilych* and *Hadji Murad*. We will also examine Tolstoy's aesthetic and didactic writing so that we understand precisely how Tolstoy answers life's most troubling questions, as well as what role artistic representation plays in these answers. *All readings will be in English.*

Requirements/Evaluation: timely completion of all reading assignments, active participation in class discussions, 2 short papers, and a final project

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 50

Enrollment Preferences: RUSS and COMP majors, then students studying Russian

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

RUSS 306(D1) COMP 306(D1)

Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies

Spring 2026

SEM Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Peter A. Orte

RUSS 331 (F) The Brothers Karamazov (WS)

Cross-listings: COMP 331 / ENGL 371

Primary Cross-listing

Widely hailed as one of the greatest novels ever written, Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* contains a series of enigmas, not the least of which is precisely who murdered the Karamazov father. In addition to exploring the shared guilt of all four of the brothers Karamazov in the crime of patricide, Dostoevsky poses the most probing questions of his day: Are families tied together merely by blood or by deeper spiritual bonds? Is religious faith possible in an age of reason, science, and technology? Can man's earthly laws ever carry out divine justice? Is humanity prepared to bear the burden of responsibility that comes with freedom? This tutorial will spend an entire semester exploring Dostoevsky's masterwork, and we will read a variety of secondary sources alongside *The Brothers Karamazov*, including history, philosophy, and literary theory. Our goal will be to understand Dostoevsky's answers to these so-called "accursed questions" through the unique artistic form of *The Brothers Karamazov*.

Requirements/Evaluation: completion of weekly reading and writing assignments, as well as active engagement during tutorial sessions

Prerequisites: at least one 200-level literature class

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: students majoring or considering a major in Russian, Comparative Literature, or English

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

COMP 331(D1) RUSS 331(D1) ENGL 371(D1)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will write six 6-page papers in the course of the semester and received detailed feedback on their writing and

argumentation for each paper, which they will be expected to incorporate into subsequent papers.

Attributes: JLST Interdepartmental Electives

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 345 (S) Bagging the Monsters : Tolstoy's Other Prose

War and Peace and *Anna Karenina*, which Henry James famously described as "baggy monsters," are works that are immediately identified with Leo Tolstoy, a giant of nineteenth-century Russian literature. But Tolstoy wrote so much more! From short works of adult fiction, to stories for children, pedagogical essays, political tracts, aesthetic treatises, and philosophical musings. He produced variously and prodigiously throughout his life and that's not even counting his fascinating diaries and personal correspondence. Our course readings will probe this exceptional variety with the goal of understanding the scope of Tolstoy's thinking in greater depth. All readings and discussion will be in Russian.

Requirements/Evaluation: Active, regular, and substantive class participation; leading discussion; weekly short writing assignments of 1-2 pages; and 1 longer writing piece of 4-5 pages.

Prerequisites: Three years of college Russian or the equivalent. Students who have not taken Russian language at Williams must consult the instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors and certificate seekers, then comparative literature majors.

Expected Class Size: 5

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 346 (S) The Nineteenth-Century Povest'

Among the genres that made nineteenth-century Russian literature famous, perhaps the most elusive is the *povest'*. Neither short story nor novella, the term *povest'* describes a type of short fiction, which any author aspiring to literary greatness in nineteenth-century Russia felt obliged to take on. This course surveys representative *povesti* by Russian writers from Karamazin to Chekhov, offering a survey of nineteenth-century Russian literature through the lens of its short fiction. Along the way, we will read *povesti* by Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy. All works will be read in the Russian original.

Requirements/Evaluation: completion of all reading assignments; two oral presentations in class; two short papers; a final project presented in class

Prerequisites: RUSS 202 or the equivalent, or permission of the instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors and those pursuing the Russian certificate.

Expected Class Size: 5

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 348 (S) Altering States: Post-Soviet Paradoxes of Identity and Difference (DPE) (WS)

Cross-listings: GBST 348 / SOC 348

Secondary Cross-listing

Critics and apologists of Soviet-style socialism alike agree that the Soviet ideology was deeply egalitarian. Putting aside for a moment the very reasonable doubts about how justified this perception actually was, it is still worth asking, how did people who lived in the world in which differences in rank, class, gender or ethnicity were not supposed to matter, make sense of their post-socialist condition, one in which new forms of difference emerged, and old ones assumed greater prominence? And how do these encounters with difference impact current events, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, or the lingering tensions between East and West Germans? This tutorial will examine new dilemmas through ethnographic studies and documentary films that aim to capture in real time the process of articulating and grappling with newly discovered divides across Eastern Europe and Eurasia. This course fulfills the DPE requirement by exploring comparatively the ways in which people in different countries made sense of the social, cultural and political heterogeneity of the post-socialist condition.

Requirements/Evaluation: 5-page paper every other week, written comments on the partner's paper in alternate weeks

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology, Sociology, and Russian majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

GBST 348(D2) RUSS 348(D1) SOC 348(D2)

Writing Skills Notes: This is a tutorial course, with plenty of opportunities to work on writing and argumentation. Tutorial papers receive written feedback from both the instructor and the tutorial partner, and are workshopped during the tutorial meetings.

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: Students will learn to identify and interrogate processes of social differentiation and exclusion as they take place across Russia and Eastern Europe. We will also train ourselves to identify parallels, as well as differences, between responses to the social and economic uncertainty ushered by the fall of socialism, and the discontents triggered by similar conditions closer to home.

Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies

Spring 2026

TUT Section: T1 M 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm Olga Shevchenko

RUSS 401 (S) National in Form, Socialist in Content: History and Cinema of Soviet Republics

The Soviet Union consisted of fifteen republics whose culture was supposed to be "national in form, socialist in content." In this course, we will study the history of multinational Soviet state through the prism of film production in the union republics. In particular, we will consider the following questions: How did the nationality policy of the USSR change in different historical periods? What kinds of films were released as a result of this policy? What were the dynamics of the relationship between the center and the republics? What meaning do such concepts as "nation," "empire," and "national culture" have in the Soviet context? And how is this experience of shared Soviet history reflected in the independent republics today?

Requirements/Evaluation: Daily work (reading and viewing responses, preparing questions for discussion); two presentations; written assignments; final project in a form of a research paper, subtitling project, or a video essay.

Prerequisites: Three years of Russian or instructor's consent.

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors, Russian certificate seekers

Expected Class Size: 5-10

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2026

SEM Section: 01 MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am Olga Kim

RUSS 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Russian

Russian senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2025

HON Section: 01 TBA Gail M. Newman

RUSS 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Russian

Russian senior thesis; this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494).

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2026

HON Section: 01 TBA Gail M. Newman

RUSS 497 (F) Independent Study: Russian

Russian independent study.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2025

IND Section: 01 TBA Gail M. Newman

RUSS 498 (S) Independent Study: Russian

Russian independent study.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2026

IND Section: 01 TBA Gail M. Newman

Winter Study -----**RUSS 25 (W) Williams in Georgia**

Williams has a unique program in the Republic of Georgia, which offers students the opportunity to engage in three-week internships in a wide variety of fields. Our students have helped in humanitarian relief organizations like Save the Children, interned in journalism at *The Georgian Times*, taught unemployed women computer skills at The Rustavi Project, documented wildlife, studied with a Georgian photographer, done rounds at the Institute of Cardiology, and learned about transitional economies at the Georgian National Bank. In addition to working in their chosen fields, students experience Georgian culture through museum visits, theater performances, lectures, and excursions. We will visit the sacred eleventh-century Cathedral of Svetitskhoveli and the twentieth-century Stalin Museum, see the birthplace of the wine grape in Kakheti, and explore the region where Jason sought the Golden Fleece. Participants are housed in pairs with English-speaking families in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital city. Students will submit weekly reports on their work while in the country (6 pages in total or the equivalent in another medium), as well as an overall reflection (4 pages or the equivalent in another medium) upon their return from Georgia.

Requirements/Evaluation: Paper(s) or report(s); Other: weekly reports on their work while in Georgia (6 pages in total or equivalent in another medium); overall reflection (4 pages or equivalent in another medium) upon return

Prerequisites: None; knowledge of Georgian or Russian is not required.

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Interested students must attend an informational meeting and submit a short essay about their interest in the course.

Expected Class Size: NA

Grading: pass/fail only

Unit Notes: Peter Orte is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian at Williams. His research includes literatures and cultures of the Caucasus, and especially Azerbaijan.

Materials/Lab Fee: \$4500

Attributes: TRVL Winter Study Travel Course

Not offered current academic year

RUSS 30 (W) Honors Project: Russian

May be taken by candidates for honors other than by thesis route.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2026

HON Section: 01

RUSS 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Russian

To be taken by students registered for Russian 493-494.

Class Format: thesis

Grading: pass/fail only

Distributions: (D1)

Winter 2026

HON Section: 01

RUSS 88 (W) Russian Sustaining Program

Students registered for RUSS 101-102 are required to attend and pass the Russian Sustaining Program. However, students are also required to register for a regular Winter Study course. Once the regular Winter Study registration process is complete, the Registrar's Office will automatically enroll you in the Sustaining Program; check your class schedule to confirm enrollment.

Requirements/Evaluation: regular attendance and active participation required to earn a "Pass"

Grading: pass/fail option only

Winter 2026

LAB Section: 01

RUSS 99 (W) Independent Study: Russian

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2026

IND Section: 01