RUSSIAN (Div I)
Chair: Professor Helga Druxes

Professors: J. Cassiday, J. van de Stadt. Assistant Professor: B. Aliev. Visiting Assistant Professor: J. Cieply, V. Ivantsov. Teaching Associate: Moskalenko.

On leave Fall/Spring: Professor Janneke van de Stadt. Assistant Professor C. Koné.

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 151 through 252 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 152 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 or 151  
104 or 152  
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 140 Fin-de Siècle Russia: Cultural Splendor, Imperial Decay  
- HIST 240 Muscovy and the Russian Empire  
- HIST 241 The Rise of the Soviet Union  
- HIST 438 Religion and Secularism in Modern Europe and Russia

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 11 (W) Queer Russia**

Crosslistings: RUSS11 / WGSS11 / COMP11  

**Primary Crosslisting**

A 2013 law banning "homosexual propaganda" represents the latest in a long series of efforts by the Russian state to erase the existence and experience of its LGBTQ citizens. This course will explore Russia's suppressed queer archive from the imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet eras, focusing on the vibrant literature, art, and film about LGBTQ Russians. We will examine works produced by and about queer Russians in an attempt to understand distinctly Russian notions of gender and sexual identity, as well as how LGBTQ Russians have formed their own identity within the country's evolving gender regime. Our survey will include works of fiction, poetry, visual art, and film from before and after the Bolshevik revolution, Stalinism and its aftermath, and the post-Soviet era. Throughout our discussions, we will work towards an alternative cultural history of Russia that will allow us to determine how and why the country's queer citizens have become the despised Other under Putin. Knowledge of Russian is not required. All readings will be in English, and all films will include English subtitles.

**Class Format:** afternoons  

**Requirements/Evaluation:** completion of reading and viewing assignments, attendance in class, active participation in discussions, and completion
RUSS 16 (W) Russian Spies in DC: FX's "The Americans"
From the beginning of the Cold War to the present, the presence of Russian intelligence operatives in the nation's capital has been the subject of fascination and speculation. In this course, we will examine the FX channel's series The Americans, in light of both the popular imaginary about Russian spies in the United States and the actual history of intelligence wars in Washington. How does the series represent the lives of Russian political and intelligence operatives during the Reagan presidency, and how does it interpret the larger events of the Cold War in its final decade? Readings will draw from accounts on both side of the Cold War, focusing on signature developments such as Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union, the covert biological weapons programs, and Soviet attempts to build relations with progressive movements in the United States. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Alexandar Mihailovic has taught at Bennington College, Williams College, and Brown and Columbia Universities. His books include *Corporeal Words: Mikhail Bakhtin's Theology of Discourse,* *Mitki: The Art of Postmodern Protest in Russia*, and the edited volume *Tchaikovsky and His Contemporaries: A Centenary Symposium.* He has also published articles about cultural relations during the Cold War, African-American studies, art history, and cinema studies.

Class Format: mornings
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation and presentations, and a final 10-page paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: discretion of the instructor
Materials/Lab Fee: none

RUSS 25 (W) Williams in Georgia
Crosslistings: RUSS25 / SPEC25
Primary Crosslisting
Williams has a unique program in the Republic of Georgia, which offers students the opportunity to engage in three-week-long 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, concerts, lectures, meetings with Georgian students, and excursions. Visit the sacred eleventh-century Cathedral of Sveti-tskhoveli and the twentieth-century Stalin Museum, take the ancient Georgian Military Highway to ski in the Caucasus Range, see the birthplace of the wine grape in Kakheti and the region where Jason sought the Golden Fleece. Participants are housed in pairs with English-speaking families in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital city. At the end of the course, students will write a 10-page paper assessing their internship experience. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Vladimir Ivantsov holds a PhD in Russian Studies from McGill University (Canada). Prior to coming to Williams, he taught at McGill University and St. Petersburg State University (Russia). His research interests cover a broad spectrum of topics, including Dostoevsky, existentialism, and rock and pop culture. He published a book on the contemporary Russian writer Vladimir Makanin.

Class Format: travel
Requirements/Evaluation: 10-page paper
Prerequisites: none; knowledge of Russian or Georgian is not required; not open to first-year students
Enrollment Limit: 8

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

Materials/Lab Fee: $2785

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses; TRVL Winter Study Travel Course

Winter 2019

TVL Section: 01 TBA Vladimir Ivantsov

RUSS 30 (W) Honors Project: Russian

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

Class Format: independent study

Distributions: (D1)

Winter 2019

HON Section: 01 TBA Helga Druxes

RUSS 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Russian

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

Class Format: thesis

Distributions: (D1)

Winter 2019

HON Section: 01 TBA Helga Druxes

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

Distributions: (D1)

Winter 2019

IND Section: 01 TBA Helga Druxes

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: seminar, the class meets five times a week

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, completion of all assignments, quizzes, tests, and a final exam

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: students expressing an interest in the Russian major or certificate

Expected Class Size: 10

Department Notes: students registered for RUSS 101-102 are required to attend and to pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit granted only if both semesters (RUSS 101 and 102) are taken.

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am  Julie A. Cassiday

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 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: seminar, the class meets five times a week

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, completion of all assignments, quizzes, tests, and a final exam

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: students expressing an interest in the Russian major or certificate

Expected Class Size: 10

Department Notes: students registered for RUSS 101-102 are required to attend and to pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit granted only if both semesters (RUSS 101 and 102) are taken

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am  Jason A. Cieply

RUSS 140 (S) Crime and Punishment in Russian History
Crosslistings: RUSS140 / HIST140

Secondary Crosslisting

For centuries, people have used crime in Russia and the Russian state's response to crime as lenses through which to examine Russian history and the Russian experience. This tutorial will follow in this tradition, but will adopt a more critical approach to question how or if crime and deviance can speak to the nature of the Russian state and its relationship to Russian society writ large. To answer this question, we will read a combination of original historical sources and recent scholarship that cover the entirety of Russian history: from the creation of the first legal code in Medieval Muscovy to the publication of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Archipelago in 1962 and beyond. By semester's end, students will have developed an understanding of both the major historical actors and events in Russian criminal and legal history, and the intellectual debates that they sparked among contemporaries and present day scholars alike.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: A student either will write and present orally a 3- to 5-page essay on the assigned readings or will be responsible for offering an oral critique of their partner's work

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: First-Year Students, and then Sophomores who have not previously taken a 100-level seminar

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D1)
RUSS 151 (F) Continuing 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 Soviet culture, current events, and daily life. Intermediate students will concentrate on expanding their vocabulary, while more advanced students will focus on reading and writing about unabridged texts in Russian. Students who complete the yearlong sequence of RUSS 151 and RUSS 152 should be well prepared to undertake study abroad in Russia and are encouraged to do so. Each year this course is custom-designed to meet the needs of those students who enroll, so that both intermediate and advanced students can benefit from taking RUSS 151 and/or RUSS 152 more than once, which may be done with the permission of the instructor.

Class Format: seminar; 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: active class participation, completion of all assignments, quizzes, and a final exam
Prerequisites: completion of at least one year of college-level Russian (RUSS 101-102) or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 4-6
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01    MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am     Vladimir Ivantsov

RUSS 152 (S) Continuing Russian II
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 Soviet culture, current events, and daily life. Intermediate students will concentrate on expanding their vocabulary, while more advanced students will focus on reading and writing about unabridged texts in Russian. Students who complete the yearlong sequence of RUSS 151 and RUSS 152 should be well prepared to undertake study abroad in Russia and are encouraged to do so. Each year this course is custom-designed to meet the needs of those students who enroll, so that both intermediate and advanced students can benefit from taking RUSS 151 and/or RUSS 152 more than once, which may be done with the permission of the instructor.

Class Format: seminar, 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: active class participation, completion of all assignments, quizzes, and a final exam
Prerequisites: RUSS 151 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 4-6
Distributions: (D1)
RUSS 203 (F) Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature: Rebels and Rebellion
Crosslistings: RUSS203 / COMP203

Primary Crosslisting

"God save us from seeing a Russian revolt, senseless and merciless," famously proclaimed Alexander Pushkin. But is revolt always senseless? And if it's not, what is the meaning behind it? Throughout the nineteenth century, Russian literature gave different answers to these questions. In this course, students will familiarize themselves with the masterpieces of the Golden Age of Russian literature with a particular focus on rebellion understood in its broadest sense: philosophical, psychological, social, sexual, and aesthetic. We will examine the confrontation of the archetypal figure of Russian literature, the "superfluous man," with his milieu in Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, and Goncharov. The social and psychological revolt of another key figure--the "little man"--will be addressed in the works of Pushkin and Gogol. We will then discuss woman's sexual rebellion in Nikolai Leskov and the forms of spiritual rebellion in Leo Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Finally, we will examine the aesthetic revolution of Chekhov's plays, which challenged the principles of the old theater and marked the turn to new modernist drama. All readings are in English.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: participation, writing assignments, written exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: students majoring or considering a major in Russian or Comparative literature
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies Electives

RUSS 204 (S) Russia's Long Revolution: a Survey of Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century Russian Culture
Crosslistings: RUSS204 / COMP204

Primary Crosslisting

With the one-hundredth anniversary of Russia's October Revolution just behind us and the uncertain future of post-Soviet Russia unfolding before us, we can now take stock of the long century of revolutions in art, politics, and society that has brought Russia to Putin. This course takes a comprehensive look at twentieth- and twenty-first-century Russian culture, focusing on the literature, film, theater, and visual art that defined this transformative period in Russia's modern history. Students will explore the radical aesthetic and political ideas that motivated this change, especially the utopian visions of the Russian avant-garde and early-Soviet Marxists, as well as key works that examine the tragic consequences of the failures of these revolutionary experiments for those who, willing or not, became their active participants. As we move on to the late-Soviet years, we will consider the emergence of a new, "conceptualist" avant-garde, which attempted to dismantle Soviet ideology and the totalitarian logic they attributed to the historical avant-garde using postmodern aesthetics. We will conclude the course by surveying literature, film, and performance that capture the traumatic experience of Russia's transition to market capitalism in the 1990s and its slide into authoritarian "stability" under Putin. Readings include works by Babel, Bulgakov, Platonov, Pasternak, Nabokov, Solzhenitsyn, Prigov, Pelevin, Sorokin, and recent Nobel laureate Svetlana Alexievich. Films screenings include the cinema of avant-garde masters Eisenstein and Vertov. All readings are in English.

Class Format: mixed lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, discussion leading, papers
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: declared or prospective Russian or Comparative Literature majors
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies Electives

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01 MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Jason A. Cieply
RUSS 213 (F)  From Putin to Pussy Riot: Discourses of Post-Soviet Gender  (DPE)
Crosslistings: GBST213 / WGSS214 / COMP257 / RUSS213

Primary Crosslisting
Before 1991, Russians typically appeared in the Western media as macho villains in the nuclear arms race or a James Bond film. Today, however, news from the Former Soviet Union often sounds like a bizarrely gendered media stunt. Russian president Vladimir Putin has been photographed topless while fishing on vacation in Siberia, while the feminist punk-rock collective Pussy Riot protested Putin’s regime by performing in day-glo balaclavas in Russia’s largest cathedral. This course examines related post-Soviet media spectacles in the attempt to understand the Western press’s fascination with Russia, as well as key social trends defining the post-Soviet era. We will focus on the ways in which gender and sexuality have come to mark post-Soviet culture and discourse as different from those in the West. In addition to Vladimir Putin and Pussy Riot, we will consider the so-called crisis of masculinity in post-Soviet Russia, the trafficking of women from the Former Soviet Union, the Ukrainian feminist collective Femen, the Eurovision Song Contest, and the 2013 legislation in the Russian Federation banning homosexual propaganda among minors. We will try to understand how concepts, such as feminism, tolerance of sexual minorities, and performed gender, have been deemed dangerous in the post-Soviet East at the very time they have attained normative status in the West. All readings will be in English, and all films will have English subtitles.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active participation in class discussions, several response papers, two short papers (3-5 pages each), and a final project

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: none

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D1) (DPE)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under RUSS or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under GBST or WGSS

This course is part of the Difference, Power, and Equity requirement because it engages in cultural comparison, explores how power and privilege are allocated differently in post-Soviet societies than in Western liberal democracies, and engages in the critical theorization of post-Soviet culture and discourse.

Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies Electives

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01    TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm    Julie A. Cassiday

RUSS 214 (S)  Contemporary Russian Culture and Politics
Crosslistings: GBST214 / RUSS214 / PSCI294 / COMP220

Primary Crosslisting
This course explores select aspects of contemporary Russian society and politics through literary works and films of post-Soviet Russia. We will study the social and political settings of particular plots and opportunities not only in fiction and film but as they emerge in the lived reality of Russians since 1991. In addition to novels and short stories by some of the best contemporary Russian authors, we will read scholarly materials explaining the social and political trends characteristic of Russia’s post-socialist transformation under Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin’s leadership. Analysis of the political and social processes will be framed in a comparative approach, drawing on parallels and differences with countries of Eastern Europe. All course readings will be in English. Knowledge of Russian is not required.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: short response essays; final exam; class participation

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: students majoring in Russian, Global Studies, Political Science, History

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under RUSS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under GBST or PSCI

Not offered current academic year
RUSS 220 (S) World War II in Russian Culture
Crosslistings: RUSS220 / COMP285 / GBST220

Primary Crosslisting

This course traces the development of state-sponsored collective memory of the Great Patriotic War, as the Eastern front of World War II is called in Russia, and its counter-narratives. The veritable cult of the war, as it was shaped by the late Soviet period, took decades to coalesce and went through multiple stages. The relative disregard in the immediate post-war years under Stalin was followed by the striking re-enactments in literature and film of the period of Khruschev's Thaw. The memory of the war for new generations was further defined in state-sponsored memorials, museums and public events under Brezhnev. While Soviet ideology was discredited in the wake of the USSR's collapse, ordinary Russians and politicians alike continue to this day to see Russia's victory over Nazi Germany with pride and as part of their national identity. This course explores the contradictory elements that make up the images and narratives of the war -- in novels, short stories, feature films, and oral histories -- which bring together state violence and individual freedom, patriotism and oppression, remembrance and forgetting. After an initial acquaintance with the colossal human cost of the war, we will examine the artistic, cultural and political traditions of addressing the national trauma that have evolved in the official and unofficial discourses of the war. The search for a "usable past" of the war continues in contemporary Russia, breaching previously suppressed topics yet also obfuscating public attempts to critically examine people's experiences of the war beyond the inherited Soviet myths.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, research paper, final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 18
Enrollment Preferences: RUSS and COMP majors
Expected Class Size: 10-15
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under RUSS or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under GBST
Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies Electives
Not offered current academic year

RUSS 222 (S) Russian Literature and European Existentialism
Crosslistings: COMP270 / RUSS222

Primary Crosslisting

Existentialism was a highly influential movement in twentieth-century European literature and thought. Nowadays the terms existentialism and existentialist are broadly used to describe the worldview and literary style of writers and thinkers as different as Fyodor Dostoevsky, Leonid Andreyev, Martin Heidegger, Franz Kafka, and Jean-Paul Sartre. Reflecting the shift to irrationalism in early twentieth-century philosophy and psychology, as well as the global cataclysms of the twentieth century, existentialism focuses on the problem of human alienation in the modern world, suggesting ways of overcoming it. In this course addressing the key concepts of existentialist philosophy (angst, borderline situation, the absurd, freedom), we will examine the origins of the existentialist worldview in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Russian literature (Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Leonid Andreyev); read and discuss existentialist texts by Kafka, Albert Camus, and Sartre; and look at the existentialist legacy in contemporary Russian and Western culture, including rock music. All readings are in English.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: participation, 3 writing assignments, oral presentation, final paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: students majoring or considering a major in Russian or Comparative Literature
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1)
Attributes: PHIL Related Courses

Spring 2019
RUSS 233 (S)  Time, Memory, and Narrative: Twentieth-Century Literature and Film
Crosslistings: COMP233 / RUSS233

Primary Crosslisting

Time and space belong to the most fundamental categories that define our conceptualization of the world we live in. Overcoming the restrictions that these dimensions impose on our existence has always been humanity's major preoccupation. Is there a way to break with time's linearity and irreversibility? One magic tool of overcoming time that we all possess is our memory. Another is art; specifically, such spatial-temporal forms of art as literature and film. Memory, literature, and film are similar in their use of narrative. In order to recast the past we pull out memories and "narrate" them to ourselves or others. A literary character's recollections and reminiscences often constitute the plot of a literary work or film. The sequence of cinematic images in film creates the visual narrative, while one of its main techniques "montage" replicates the seemingly random association of memories in our mind. Apart from its structural significance, time constitutes an important subject of artists' philosophical reflection in both literature and film. In this course, we will explore the themes of time and memory in their relation to different narrative strategies by way of a few masterpieces of 20th-century Russian/Soviet literature and film. How can trains on the Railroad around Moscow annihilate time? What happens if Tsar Ivan the Terrible finds himself in Soviet Moscow? Where does the Russian Ark float and whom does it carry? To answer these and other questions we will read the novels of Vladimir Nabokov and his most congenial successor Sasha Sokolov; a play by Mikhail Bulgakov, and a novella by Vladimir Makanin, among others. We will also watch and discuss the famous films by Leonid Gaidai, Andrey Tarkovsky, and Aleksander Sokurov. In addition, we will read a few scholarly essays on time, memory, and narrative, relating them to our primary material. Readings, films, and discussions are in English.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: participation, writing assignments, discussion prompts, a final project
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: students majoring or considering a major in Russian or Comparative Literature
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

RUSS 240 (F)  The Soviet Experiment
Crosslistings: RUSS240 / HIST240

Secondary Crosslisting

In 1917, the former Russian Empire became the site of the world's first socialist revolutionary government and the twentieth century's largest multiethnic state. Over the next quarter century, the Soviet Union witnessed the rise of one of history's most violent dictatorships, an apocalyptic war that claimed upwards of 26 million lives, and communist expansion into Eastern Europe and the decolonizing world. It also became the site of vibrant and optimistic utopian cultural projects, flights into space, bitter and hilarious political satire, and a society that was, for the most part, economically equal. Then in 1991, everything fell apart. This course will survey the origins, life, and collapse of the Soviet Union, paying particular attention to the ideas that shaped its development, the mark its architects' and leaders' policies left both at home and abroad, and the impact it had on the people who lived and didn't live to tell the tale.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation based on active class participation, two short essays (3-5 pages), one in-class midterm, and one take-home final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 40
Enrollment Preferences: History Majors
Expected Class Size: 15-20
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under HIST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under RUSS
Attributes: HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia
RUSS 248 (F) Altering States: Post-Soviet Paradoxes of Identity and Difference (DPE) (WI)

Secondary Crosslisting

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 postsocialist 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 the Russia-Ukraine conflict or the persistent 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. We will focus especially closely on Russia, but will also read studies on East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland and Ukraine. 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 postsocialist condition.

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

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology, Sociology, and Russian majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under SOC or GBST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under RUSS DPE: This course fulfills the requirement by teaching the students to identify and interrogate processes of social differentiation and exclusion as they take place across Russia and Eastern Europe. Apart from exploring comparatively the ways in which people in the region made sense of the social, cultural, and political heterogeneity of the postsocialist condition, 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.
RUSS 252 (S)  Continuing Russian II
The same course as RUSS 152 but for students at the advanced level. See RUSS 151/152 for full course description.

Class Format: seminar, 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: active class participation, completion of all assignments, quizzes, and a final exam

Prerequisites: RUSS 251 or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: none

Expected Class Size: 4-6

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01    MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am     Vladimir Ivantsov

RUSS 275 (S)  Russian and Soviet Cinema
Crosslistings: COMP287 / RUSS275

Primary Crosslisting
In this course, we will survey over a hundred years of Russian and Soviet film to explore how cinema has reflected and, at times, created the country's most important historical events and cultural myths. We will pay close attention to Russian filmmakers' varied reactions to Hollywood cinema, as well as to the lively body of cinema theory that these reactions generated. Our survey will begin in the pre-Revolutionary era and include representative films from the time of the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalinism and World War II, the Thaw and Stagnation, Glasnost, and the Putin era. In addition to studying films by auteur filmmakers, such as Sergei Eisenstein, Andrei Tarkovsky, and Aleksandr Sokurov, we will watch movies made for the masses, which have helped to form Russians' understanding of their country and themselves. All readings will be in English and all films will be viewed with English subtitles

Class Format: seminar

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

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: INST Russian + Eurasian Studies Electives

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01    TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm     Julie A. Cassiday

RUSS 277 (F)  The Self Under Stalin: a Genealogy of Soviet Subjectivity  (DPE)
Crosslistings: COMP269 / RUSS277

Primary Crosslisting
In this course, students will explore a variety of cultural artifacts (literature, film, song, visual art, architecture), personal documents (diaries and letters), and secondary literature, which speaks to the real, subjective experience of life in the Soviet Union under Stalin. Throughout his reign, Stalin spurned basic human values like freedom and democracy in favor of class hatred, discipline, and conformity. He unleashed unthinkable violence on the Soviet population, provoking mass famine and instigating campaigns of political terror, all in the name of transforming impoverished, agricultural Russia into the world's first industrially advanced, socialist society. The underlying logic of this social experiment has been diagnosed as totalitarian, a distinction designating systems of governance in which the state uses a combination of coercion and propaganda to achieve total control over the
thoughts and actions of its subjects. The opening of borders and archives since the fall of the Soviet Union, however, has shown the image of the passive, brainwashed automaton to be inadequate in relation to the everyday cares, aspirations, fears, joys and sorrows, ethical dilemmas, personal narratives, and forms of covert resistance that shaped the identities of ordinary Soviet people. Scholars of Soviet subjectivity have worked to bring these stories to light in an attempt to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the Soviet experience. Students will apply insight from this field to their own investigations of Soviet selfhood in discussions, short response papers, and a final research paper. All readings are in English.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, short response papers, final paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors, History majors, Comparative Literature majors
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D1) (DPE)
Distribution Notes: DPE: This course is part of the Difference, Power, and Equity initiative not only because it explores the formation of identity in situations in which the state wields extreme power over the actions and speech of its subjects, but also because it confronts the limitations of the concept of totalitarianism in representing the experience of such subjects. Special attention will be devoted to issues of class, gender, ethnicity, and non-human actors as they relate to the problem of Soviet subjectivity.

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01    TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm    Jason A. Cieply

RUSS 286 (F) Russian Politics under Vladimir Putin
Crosslistings: RUSS286 / PSCI286

Secondary Crosslisting
In 1939, Winston Churchill has famously characterized Russia as a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. In the 75 years that followed, Russian politics has continued to defy expectations and conventional explanations. The collapse of the Soviet Communist dictatorship in 1991 has caught most observers by surprise, and has led Russia on a path of political and economic liberalization of an unprecedented scope. But despite the initial optimism, these processes produced an economic system characterized by crony capitalism and an electoral authoritarian regime--a political system that formally espouses institutions like multipartyism, parliaments and elections, but violates democratic norms in practice. Why did Russia follow this particular trajectory? Why did Russia's political and economic transition fail to produce the intended results? What are the factors that gave rise to and sustain Vladimir Putin's system? And as Russia faces extraordinary challenges again--marked by the protest wave in 2011-12, the country's economic crisis, the wars in Ukraine and Syria, and the renewed confrontation with the West--what lessons can we draw for the future? This course will explore the key perspectives on these issues. The first part of the course will provide a concise overview of Russia's historical background, the roots of the communist collapse, and the country's subsequent trajectory. It will place particular emphasis on the events, processes and legacies that shaped Russia's transition, and its cataclysms and distortions. The second part of the course will look into the rise of the Putin regime, its key pillars, and its contradictions. The third part of the course will survey the impact of Putin's regime on Russia's economy, governance, identity politics and foreign relations. In this segment, we will also examine how protests and civil society activism shaped post-Communist Russian politics, and conclude with a discussion of the scenarios for the future trajectory of Russia. The course will approach many of these topics from a comparative perspective, contrasting how political, economic and social processes in Russia diverged from other countries in post-Communist East Europe and the Former Soviet Union. The course will also take an interdisciplinary approach, integrating perspectives from political science, economics, history, anthropology, social psychology and other disciplines, as it attempts to address the key puzzles of contemporary Russian politics. To provide a more intimate understanding of the social changes and political processes affecting Russia, we will also survey key films, documentaries and other relevant sources and materials in the media and popular culture.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: mid-term exam, term paper, class participation
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: Political Science and Russian majors
RUSS 305 (F) Dostoevsky: Navigating Through the Underground

Crosslistings: COMP305 / RUSS305

Primary Crosslisting

In this course, students will acquaint themselves with Dostoevsky's oeuvre–from his early masterpieces to his artistic testament, The Brothers Karamazov. The key concept through which we will approach Dostoevsky's various writings will be the underground--a powerful metaphor of spiritual decay, angst, resentment, and rebellion against the whole of creation shared by many Dostoevsky characters, from the anonymous protagonist of Notes from Underground, to Raskolnikov (Crime and Punishment), to all the brothers Karamazov. Inheriting Dostoevsky's own existential doubts, his major characters strive to find an exit from their various "undergrounds," some with and some without success. What are the philosophical, psychological, and artistic foundations of the underground? How does one end up there in Dostoevsky's view? And what is the way out? These are just a few of the questions to be answered as we explore the primary genius of Russian literature. All readings are in English.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: attendance and participation in discussion, one 1-page writing assignment, two research papers, digital project, final project (paper)

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: RUSS and COMP majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm     Vladimir Ivantsov

RUSS 306 (S) Rise and Shine with Tolstoy

Crosslistings: COMP306 / RUSS306

Primary Crosslisting

Prepare to alternately fall in love and lock horns with this illustrious nineteenth-century Russian author. He is worth it! This course will examine the life and major works of Leo Tolstoy in the context of Western intellectual history. Readings will include his two great novels, War and Peace and Anna Karenina, as well as a number of shorter works, such as The Cossacks and Hadji Murat. We will also consider some of Tolstoy's aesthetic and didactic works as we examine his broad, rich, and sometimes unexpected development as an artist and thinker.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active and substantive class participation; short papers; leading class discussion

Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: RUSS and COMP majors

Expected Class Size: 7

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: GBST Russian + Eurasian Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year
RUSS 331 (S)  The Brothers Karamazov  (WI)
Crosslistings: COMP331 / ENGL371 / RUSS331

Primary Crosslisting
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*.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on completion of weekly reading and writing assignments, as well as active engagement during tutorial sessions

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

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

Distributions: (D1)  (WI)

Attributes: JLST Interdepartmental Electives;

Spring 2019
TUT Section: T1    TBA    Julie A. Cassiday

RUSS 337 (F)  After Stalin: Soviet History from "Thaw" to Collapse
Crosslistings: HIST337 / RUSS337

Secondary Crosslisting
When Joseph Stalin died in 1953, the crowd of people that gathered to view his embalmed body on Moscow's Red Square grew so large, it provoked a stampede that killed nearly 500 people. This moment embodies the uncertainty and challenges that ordinary citizens and state officials faced when they imagined what a post-Stalin future might bring to the Soviet Union. For all the suffering that his rule infected on the Soviet people, Stalin remained for many a reliable constant in a life dominated by revolution and war. Stalin's successors faced a classic dilemma: how to reform and breathe new life into a system without disturbing the foundation it needs to stand intact? Despite superpower status and some stunning achievements at home and abroad, the fault lines in Soviet society ran deep. This course will consider the experiences that grew out of the uncertainty that emerged after Stalin's death. We will examine how the "Soviet experiment" evolved - politically, legally, socially, culturally - once the last of the original Bolshevik revolutionaries left the Kremlin. What opportunities did the post-Stalin moment open up for political elites, members of the professional class, the intelligentsia, and citizens from Soviet republics and satellite states? What obstacles did they face, and how successful were they at overcoming them? In what ways did the spirit of the October and Stalinist Revolutions persist or erode from 1953 until 1991? Most importantly, how did the "children of the revolution" participate in, check out of, or contest the socialist system whose birth their parents witnessed first hand? After all, more generations experienced the Soviet Union without Stalin as their leader than generations who only knew a life with the "Vozhd" in power. Through secondary and primary source readings, we will attempt to recover the voices of those whose lives both shaped and were shaped by the nearly four decades after Joseph Stalin's death.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation based on active class participation, three short essays (2-3 pages), and one long essay (8-10 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: History Majors

Expected Class Size: 15-20

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under HIST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under RUSS

Attributes: HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01 TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm Yana Skorobogatov

RUSS 341 (S) Collapse: The Fall and Afterlife of the Soviet Union

Crosslistings: RUSS341 / HIST341

Secondary Crosslisting

On Christmas Day 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev ended two things: his tenure as President of the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union itself. The following day, Boris Yeltsin entered office as the first president of the Russian Federation, and without delay, began to institute radical economic and social reforms. Under his watch, the country privatized national industry, cut the state budget, and courted foreign multinational businesses. The world most commonly used to describe Russia in the early 1990s is "disappear": money, jobs, food, and people. The very things that Soviet-style socialism had committed itself to providing for started to vanish as a result of invisible and market forces. This course will explore what emerged in the spaces left empty after Soviet-style socialism's demise in three parts. The first part of the semester will examine the origins of the Soviet Union's collapse and its breakup into fifteen successor states. The second part of the semester will survey the political, economic, and social processes that followed the collapse. Finally, the third part of the course will focus on Putin's ascendency to the presidency and its consequences for Russian citizens at home and Russia's image abroad. By semester's end, students will have acquired the content and analytical literacy to place present-day Russia in its specific historical context and identify multiple sources of causation that may help explain Russia's transition from socialism to capitalism to Putinism during the past quarter century.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation based on active class participation, three short essays (3-5 pages), and one long essay (10-12 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 25

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Yana Skorobogatov

RUSS 401 (F) Senior Seminar: The Myth of Lenin

Lenin lived, Lenin lives, Lenin will live Forever! So proclaimed the Soviet slogan, pointing out the mythological status of the Communist leader. This course, conducted in Russian, aims to demonstrate that the Lenin myth was so powerful that it survived the collapse of the state and ideology he created. We will explore the development of the myth and cult of Lenin by way of a variety of texts and media, from classical poems by Mayakovsky, to children's stories, folklore, conceptualist art, and Soviet and post-Soviet film.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: attendance and participation in class discussions, three written essays, oral presentation, final creative project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: RUSS 202, or equivalent, or permission of the instructor
RUSS 402 (S) Senior Seminar: Russia under Putin
This course is conducted in Russian and explores cultural and political trends of Russian society since 2000. We will work with authentic print and audiovisual media reports, feature and documentary films, analytical and research materials to develop a wide-ranging understanding of ordinary Russians’ lives, their outlook and political views. In 2018, the course includes a trip to Russia, paid for by the College, during which students will interact with Russians, visit key sites of interest, and conduct a study project within the parameters of the course.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: attendance and participation in class discussions; preparation of video questions; three 3-page written essays; two 10-minute oral presentations; final 5-page research paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: RUSS 202 or equivalent
Enrollment Limit: 6
Enrollment Preferences: Russian majors
Expected Class Size: 2
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

RUSS 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Russian
Russian senior thesis.
Class Format: independent study
Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)
Extra Info 2: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
HON Section: 01 TBA Helga Druxes

RUSS 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Russian
Russian senior thesis.
Class Format: independent study
Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)
Extra Info 2: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
HON Section: 01 TBA Helga Druxes

RUSS 497 (F) Independent Study: Russian
Russian independent study.

Class Format: independent study

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
IND Section: 01    TBA    Helga Druxes

RUSS 498 (S) Independent Study: Russian

Russian independent study.

Class Format: independent study

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
IND Section: 01    TBA    Helga Druxes